RICE UNIVERSITY

ON THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

by

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On the School of Architecture

Abstract

The purpose of this project is to question the concept of *formal* in architecture by exploring the notion of *programmatic*. From the classical treatises to the Modern Movement, the fundamental tenet of architectural ideology has been expressed in architectural forms which exemplify a unitary vision of firmness, commodity, and delight. Today, the function of architectural form has been discarded on behalf of programmatic conditions. My design project—a school of architecture—has been set to explore the notion where the organization of space and structure mediates the formal solution of the building.

Contents Page

School of Architecture
on the Program:

The production of architecture is about the construction of the physical world. As a product of the mind, as a conceptual and dematerialized discipline on the one hand, architecture is only possible as a sensual experience of the physical space. The reality of architecture is ultimately constituted by what is built and the process that leads to it — research, writing, drawings, and so forth that aim for the focus on the production of the built world. It is along this line that the idea of architecture is constructed. It is along this line that the argument about the discipline needs to be developed.

From the Renaissance to the Modern Movement, architecture has been primarily understood as a set of rules, corresponding to social and ideological practices. Imposed by a rational thought, architecture was an inseparable part of the evolution of society—progressive development that was identified with a constant movement towards growing complexity. Whether based on analysis of historical traditions or on functional beliefs, architecture has insistently sought the most accurate representation of its time and the modes of its plausible expression. In the last decades our world became too complex for the application of the classical (in its broadest sense) aesthetic.

The recognition that architecture might not be applicable to the present historical conditions, has called for a redefinition (or relocating) of the discipline in respect to the other contemporary social practices. This process seemed both necessary and inevitable. However, many recent attempts at such a demarcation shifted the practice and rationale of architecture into the immaterial world of media, cybernetics, virtual reality, and literature—that is to say to the "architecture" that excludes the building in the last instance. In an attempt to broaden the boundaries that historically have defined the architectural field of operation, architecture was "dematerialized" into the realm of concepts and displaced by the new "languages" of electronics, DNA, chaos, and complex system studies. This is a key repositioning which ultimately creates more problems than resolves.

Is architecture a free-floating object or is it embedded in some context?—this is perhaps the most critical question which foregones the whole critical discourse on the discipline. And if architecture *is* rooted in some context, with what degree of autonomy does it operate within the context, affirming, repressing, or replicating that context? Is all architecture "contextual"?

The critical thinking within contemporary architectural criticism identifies two major and fundamentally different approaches to the question of architectural discourse: the argument for absolute autonomy of architecture (and therefore its independence from any contextual interpretation), and the recognition of the collapse of architecture into other regions of human activity, say science and information. Both of these arguments stand for very controversial projects in architecture and therefore deserve careful examination. However, it is to our advantage not to target any particular position but to think through this dilemma and search for possible and legitimate outcomes for architectural practice with respect to theory, culture, politics, and education.

The construction of meaning in architecture is inseparable from the construction of architectural form. Genesis of the form, as might be argued, cannot be indifferent to social and cultural conventions where this construction takes place. However, as far as the relationship between form and content is structurally arbitrary, the nature of the form (or the sign) might be conceived as free from any narratives or any other generative systems except architectural order itself. This notion perhaps the most explicitly revealed in the essay "The End of The Classical..." by Peter Eisenman, where instead of "fictions" of representation, reason and history, Eisenman proposes a model of architecture as an *independent discourse*, free from external values—classical or otherwise—meaning free, arbitrary and timeless.[1] What is being suggested, in a sense, is to experience architecture as *such*, as an abstract architectural order that no longer seeks to embody any specific meaning, but creates a formal and material environment able to evoke an infinite number of readings. Here lies the essence of the argument: architecture can be generated only through return to itself as an autonomous and pure discipline, the true object of architecture is nothing other than the architecture itself.

Yet, on the other hand, the different regions of the architectural criticism recognizes the fruitful but problematic concept of intertextuality that, in general, dissolves architecture into fields of seemingly distant disciplines, bridged in our contemporary world by media and scientific thought. Multiple references, sometimes drawn from the most wildly separated disciplines, ultimately turn architecture into a heterogeneous body of texts that can be interconnected and/or rewritten. The necessary attempts to approximate such "writings" in architectural theory into a building strategy would make the latter radically occasional. Perhaps that is why the numerous efforts were made—especially in the last twenty years—to conceptualize an eventually random approach into a set of rules, able to yield a design strategy out of chaos of freely crossed allusions from mathematics to biology.

By means of a highly inventive processes, linguistic studies, information and communicational technologies were applied to the field of architecture. Using various "grafting," "scaling," and "mapping" techniques, a strategy of reading has been converted into design processes where two or more narrative systems merge in continuous affiliation through mutual resistance and negation. This new theory pushed architecture away from complexity and contradiction, found in traditional methods of assembling architectural forms, and took an advantage on *saturation* of complexities of the modern world by clashing them onto themselves, more and more problematizing the possible message of the final architectural product. The whole program of self-referentiality (P. Eisenman), aimed to interpret architecture as a (linguistic) product of social determinants (and thus insisted on the autonomy of architecture and architectural form that referred only to itself, to its own history and language) and the argument of intertextuality (R. Koolhaas)--an attempt to incorporate rhetorics of different fields of study into architecture--displaced architectural codes by other remotely active disciplines. Film, video, computer generation and imaging have recently enhanced presentational quality of design processes, however leaving the whole in severily disfigured fragments.

Yet is there something else at work? Increasingly supressed by information and communication technologies, architecture reacts by *becoming* those technologies and denies its own modes of operation. The "mapping" of the real becomes indistinguishable from the real itsef; the image of the object substitutes the actual experience of the object. We all seem to accept the fact that informational rendering has progressively constructed our experience of space. And the space *is* real unless otherwise suggested. Are we forever trapped between architecture of complete self-involvement—that is of absolute autonomy—and architecture annihilated by some invisible distant forces, in fact, to a certain degree everpresent in every time in every society? By exploding the boundaries of architecture we paradoxically limit the richness of the discipline itself, its essence and its modes of operation. Architecture has turned in on a limited vision of itself.

If one has a passion for the absolute that cannot be healed, there is no other way out than to constantly contradict oneself and to reconcile opposite extremes.

Frederick Schlegel

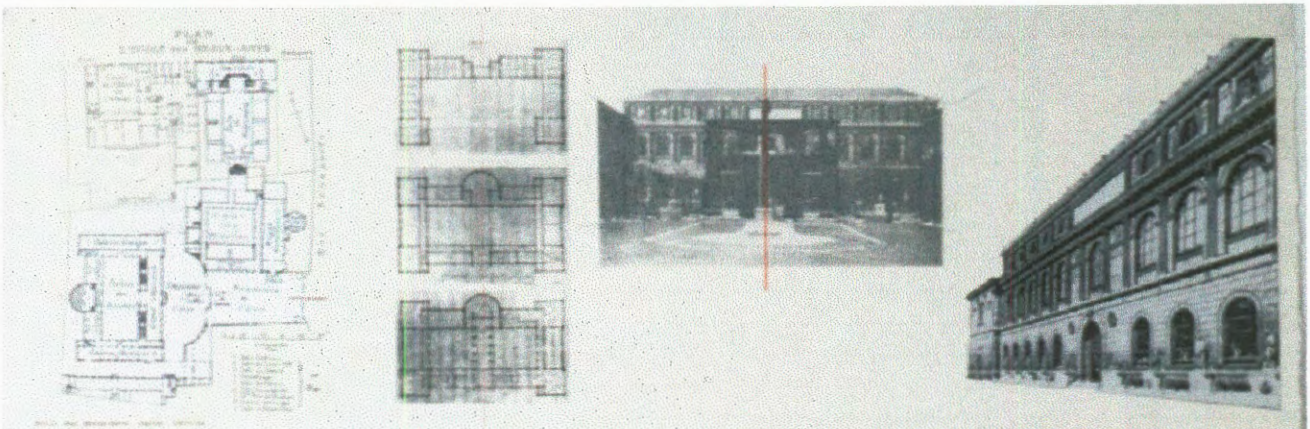
The diversity of architecture resides in its expression but not in its substance. Perhaps we have to start with a few recognitions that will give the basis for the argument.

— Architectural production is political. Its political role was recognized a long time ago (Egypt, Greece, Rome) and since then architecture has always been implicated in the representation of power, even denying doing so. It is important to realize the authority of architecture in the context of the contemporary world.

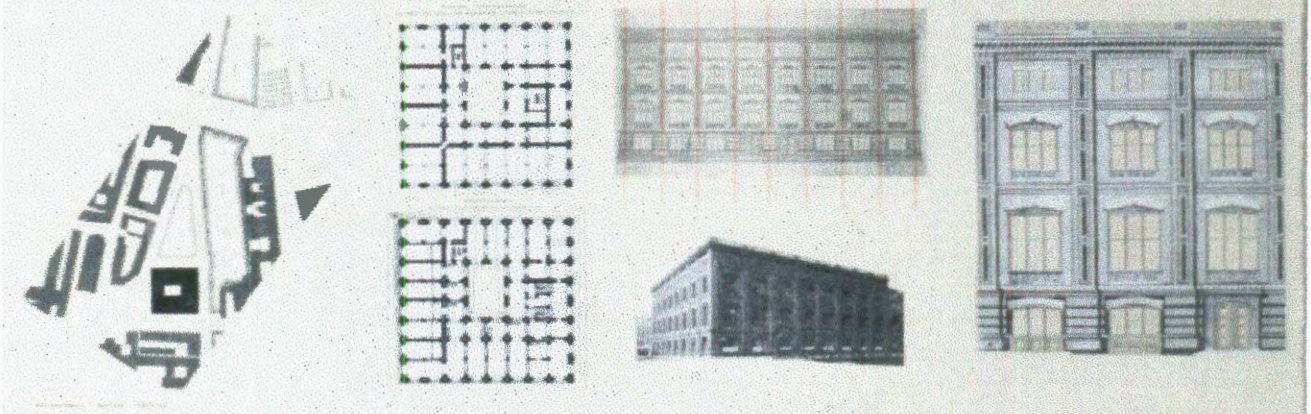
— Architecture constitutes our physical and cultural environment. Being a part of our everyday life, it becomes a component of the immediate reality of its subjects both on a local and global scale. Therefore, architecture must cautiously determine its position within the most comprehensive understanding of that environment.

— Architecture is material. Whatever conceptual trope it wishes to deploy, it is brick and mortar, shelter and home. Architecture is a very specific knowledge of *making* that shapes initial idea into concrete and definable forms.

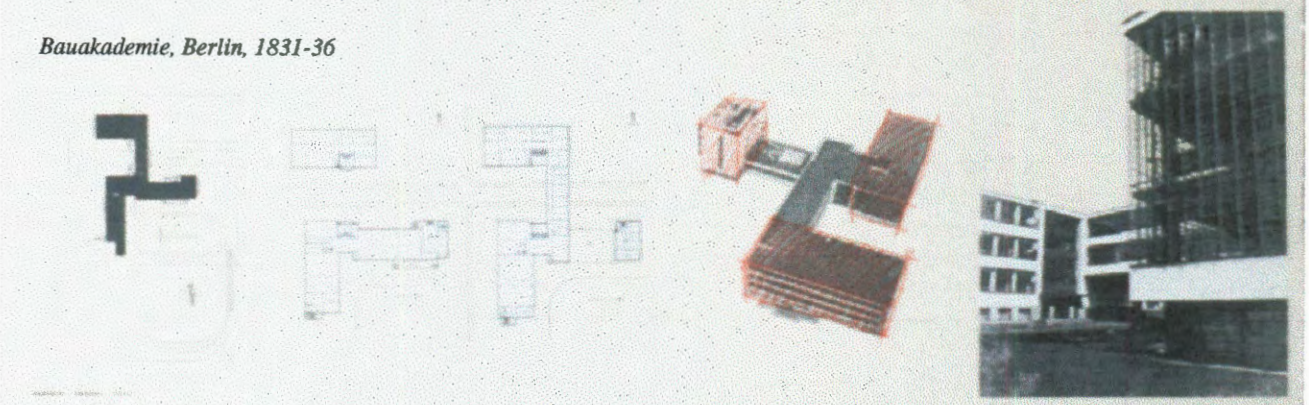
These claims will no doubt move architecture away from its clinch in seductive "self-involvement" which reduces the discipline to purely conceptual and almost hermeneutic studies. Yet there is another part of the argument that (re)positions architecture in the real world. Architecture is a *profession*, which relies heavily upon both abstract thinking and practical skills. The physical artifact, the building, the product of the profession, requires the synthesis of the cognitive base of the discipline—its theory and criticism—with the practical knowledge—the methods—of its performing. Perhaps then the (paradoxical) relationship between the "ideal space" of mental constructions and "real space" of spatial experience will not disintegrate the discipline onto incompatible parts but unify it into sensuous whole. The attention to architecture as politics, as physical and cultural environment, and as a body of professional knowledge will reaffirm its essential properties and its importance rather than abandon it to the contemporary world of cyberspace. Perhaps it is these ideals that current architectural education should seek. It is those principles that the institution of contemporary architectural education, a school of architecture, should be built upon.



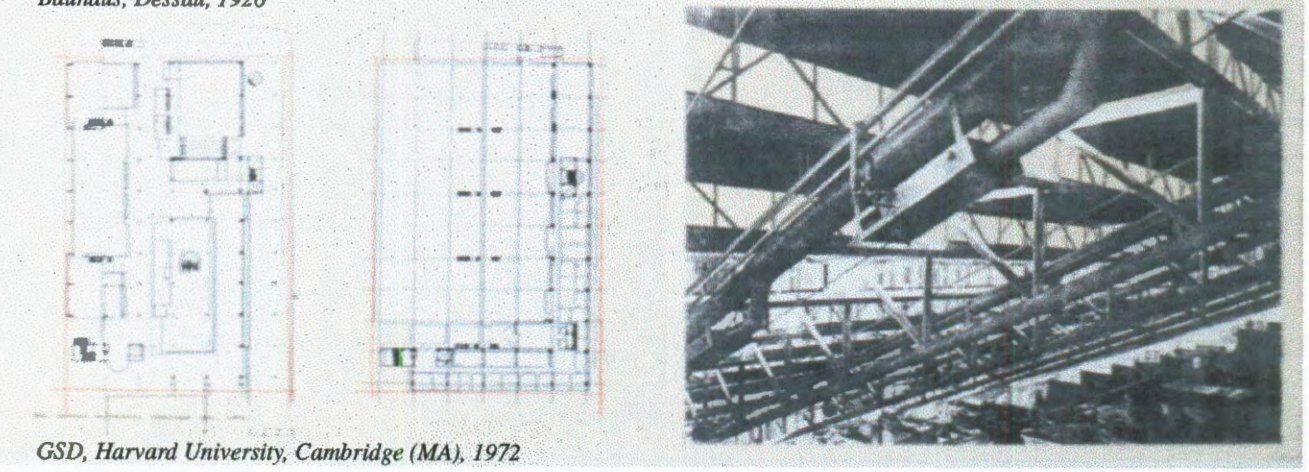
Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris, 1833-39



Bauakademie, Berlin, 1831-36

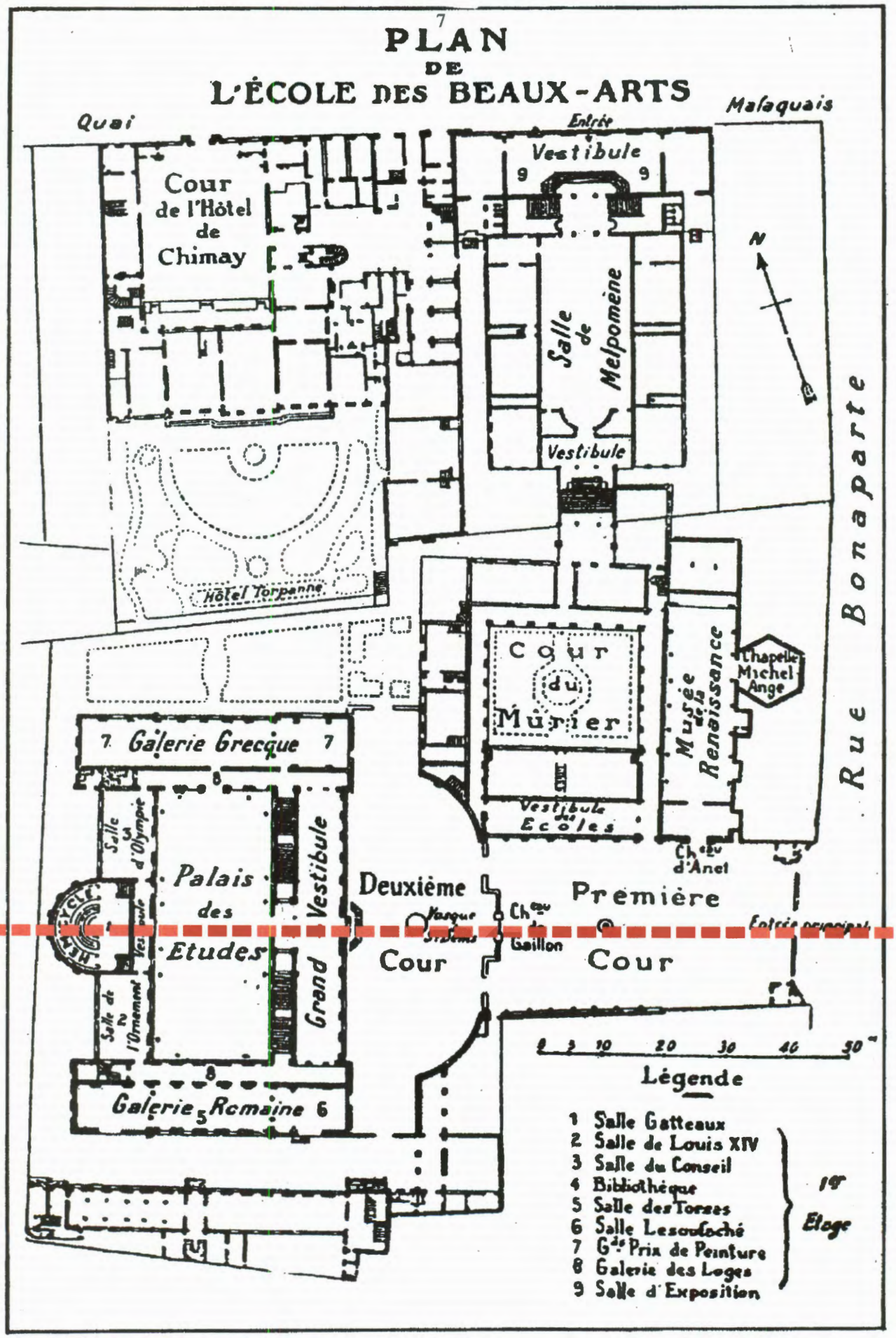


Bauhaus, Dessau, 1926



GSD, Harvard University, Cambridge (MA), 1972

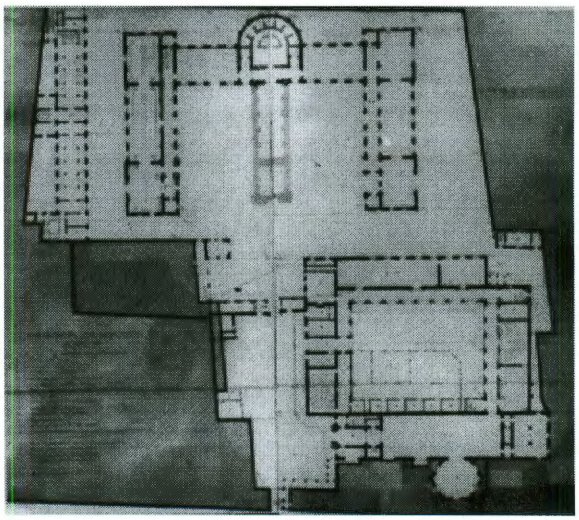
PLAN DE L'ÉCOLE DES BEAUX-ARTS



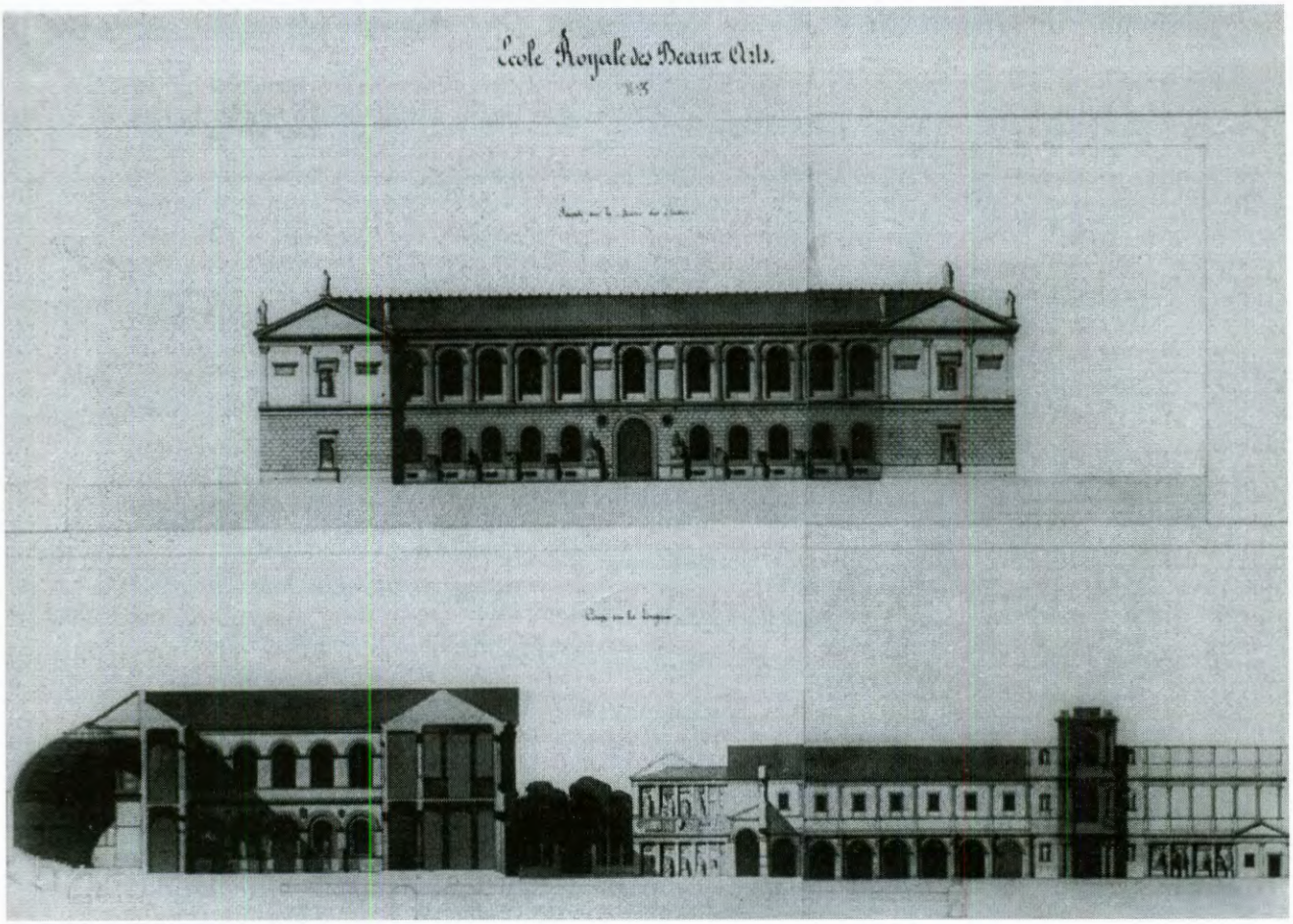
The Building of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris

Shortly after January 1833, when the Conseil des Batiments Civil set up a program for the new Ecole, Felix Duban was given a "list of the areas essential for the different departments of the Ecole" which included classrooms and studios for everyday teaching, exhibition areas for everyday teaching, exhibition areas for the Concours d'Emulation and the Grand Prix, and storage space for works. Duban was also asked to stipulate areas for the Musee des Etudes, the library, and an assembly hall. Three months later, Duban submitted his proposal.

The Ecole was not built at once. It was built around a core of older buildings (in time the Musee des Monument Francais) which create a complex urban structure, a series of spaces subordinated to the axial symmetry of the Palace des Etudes. According to Duban's scheme, teaching would take place in the new building--Palais des Etudes--rather than the cloister of the Petits Augustins. He proposed that the different activities of the school should be separated, as had been demanded since 1817 by the director and professors of Ecole. Those parts of the Palace already built were to be retained, except for the foundation of the gallery connecting the main block, on the east, to the amphitheatre on the west, cutting the courtyard in two (this gallery he had introduced in his plan for cellars of 1832).[2]



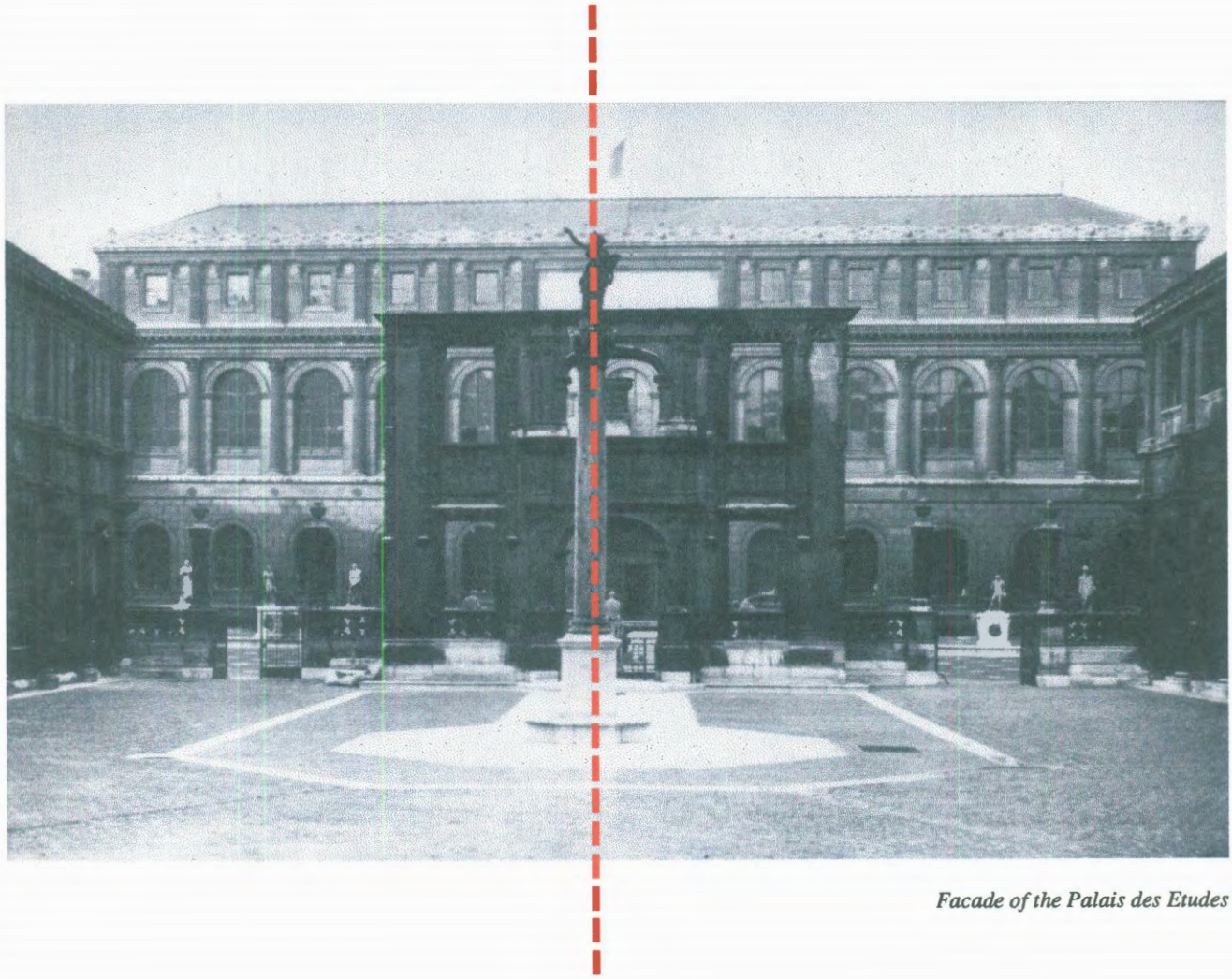
Plan of the Beaux-Arts in March 1833, before Duban's proposal



F. Duban. Rendered design for the Palais des Etudes, 1833

Palais des Etudes, the key building of the ensemble of Ecole, was laid out in accordance with the canons of French academism. In short, the French academic tradition tended to follow the precedents established by earlier works of art, particularly those regarded as "classic." In architecture this meant following examples of the general classical tradition, whether those of Antiquity or the Renaissance. The dogmatism in large part resulted from the belief of the conservatives that the principles of beauty are fixed and there exist natural "laws" of design. The dominant theory in the French Royal Academy of Architecture derived primarily from classical 'idealist' philosophy, especially the idealism of Aristotle and the Neo-Platonists: Aristotelian abstraction as *symmetry*, *order*, *harmony*, and *proportion*, believed to differentiate the fine arts from mere craft. It was also believed that good design, founded on Aristotelian principles, can be formulated only by the study of particular works, buildings and parts of building, executed at a specific time by particular designers. Eternal and unchanging principles of architectural design were believed to potray the True and the Beautiful of architecture.

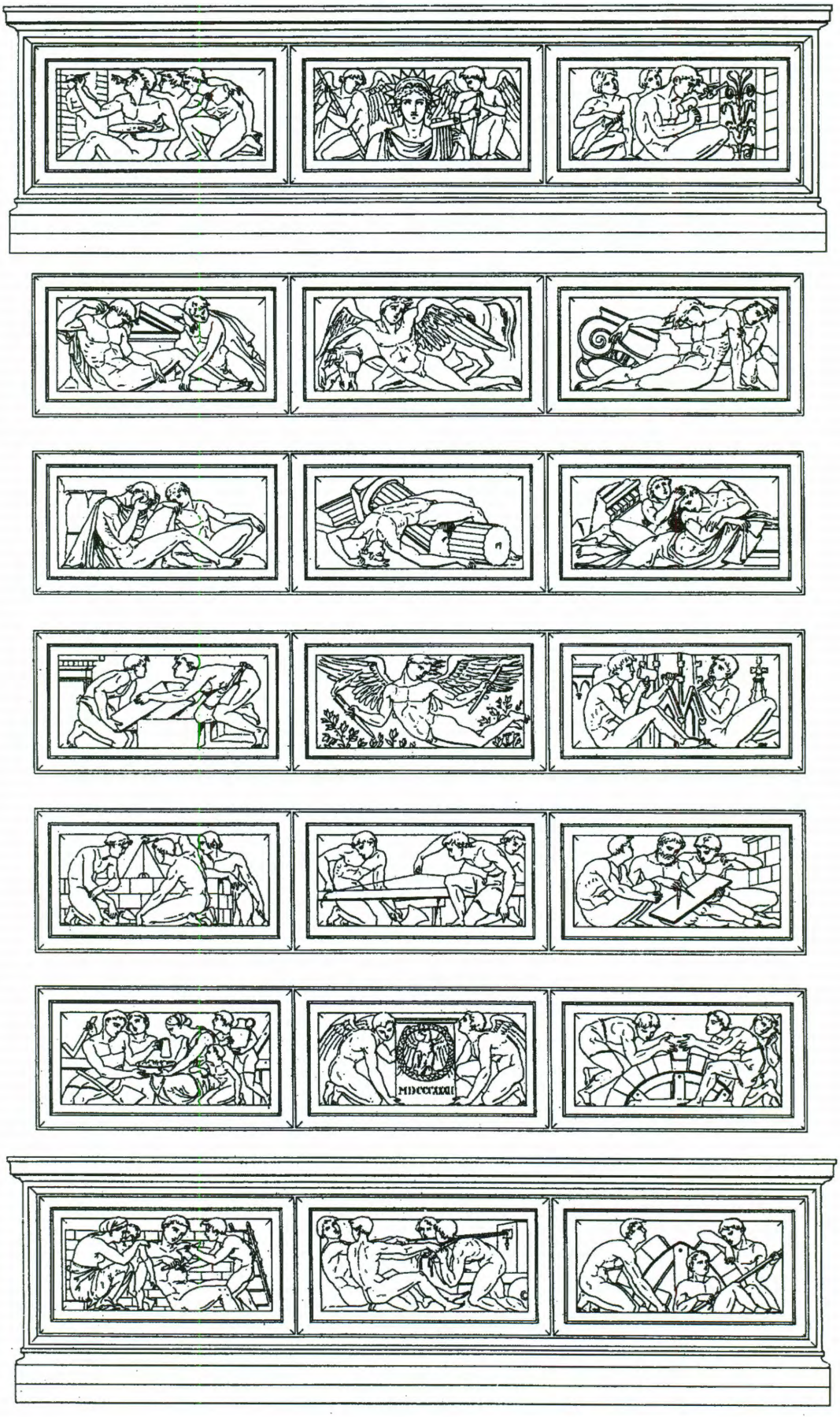
At the time the Academie Royale d'Architecture was founded, symmetry and proportion were regarded as closely related and necessary condition of compositional unity. The two principles remained very important throughout the whole history of French academism, even though the degree of symmetry varied considerably at different periods. It is not surprising, then, to find that both the main facade and the floor plan of Palais des Etudes is strictly symmetrical in respect to the imaginary axis that joins the entrance of the Palais with the principlal entrance to the Ecole. The axial symmetry is the key to design of the Palais--the symmetry of its facade and its central position emphasize its importance within the whole ensemble of the school. Thus the large and the complex shcheme of the Ecole was given an effect of simple geometrical clarity of organization that was at once academic and peculiarly French.



Facade of the Palais des Etudes

The court of the Palais des Beaux-Arts was to be open to the sky. On March 9, 1861, the committee charged with the agreement of the new building proposed that it be glassed over. Duban took up the idea; he founded an iron-and-glass roof as a proper solution to the programme: eight Corinthian columns, 6.75 metres high, cross-braces, four trusses, and rafters of iron, are need to hold the panes of glass.[3] Metal was thus adapted to the classical orders. Duban's work was done, though the court was not fully completed by 26 August 1867.

Courtyard of the Palais des Etudes covered by iron-and-glass roof, completed in 1867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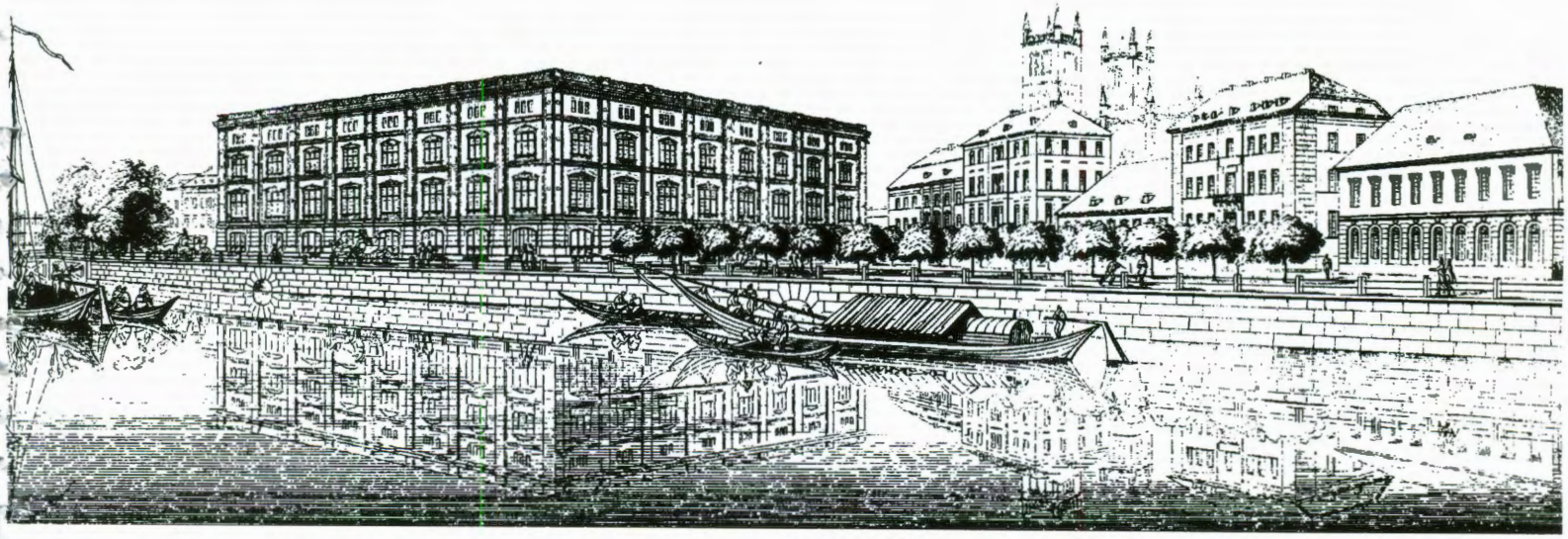
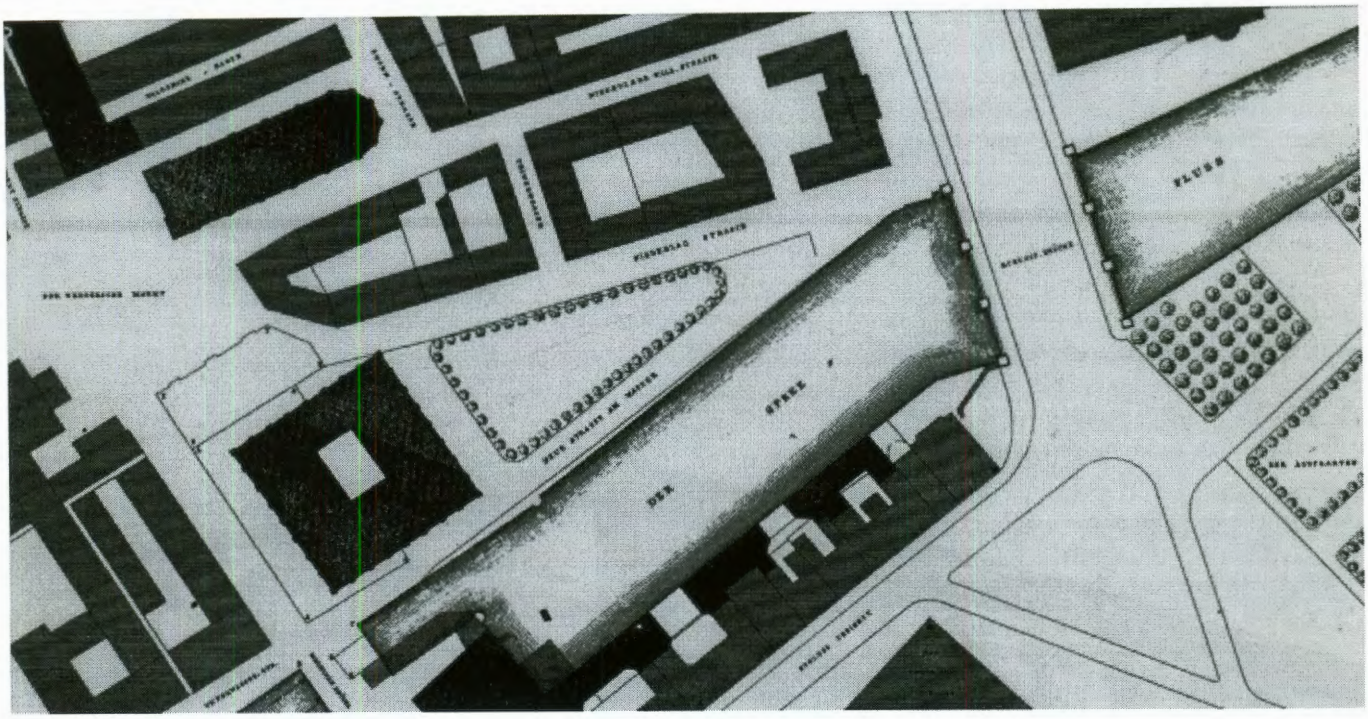
Bauakademie, Berlin

Perhaps one of the most valuable lessons to be drawn from Karl Shinkel's design achievements in central Berlin is his outstanding ability to assimilate his own new additions into the urban fabric of existing buildings and spaces. Shinkel valued individual work as much as its integration into an overall urban environment. Design of the Bauakademie (formerly Allgemeine Bauschule) is only one such example of that principle.



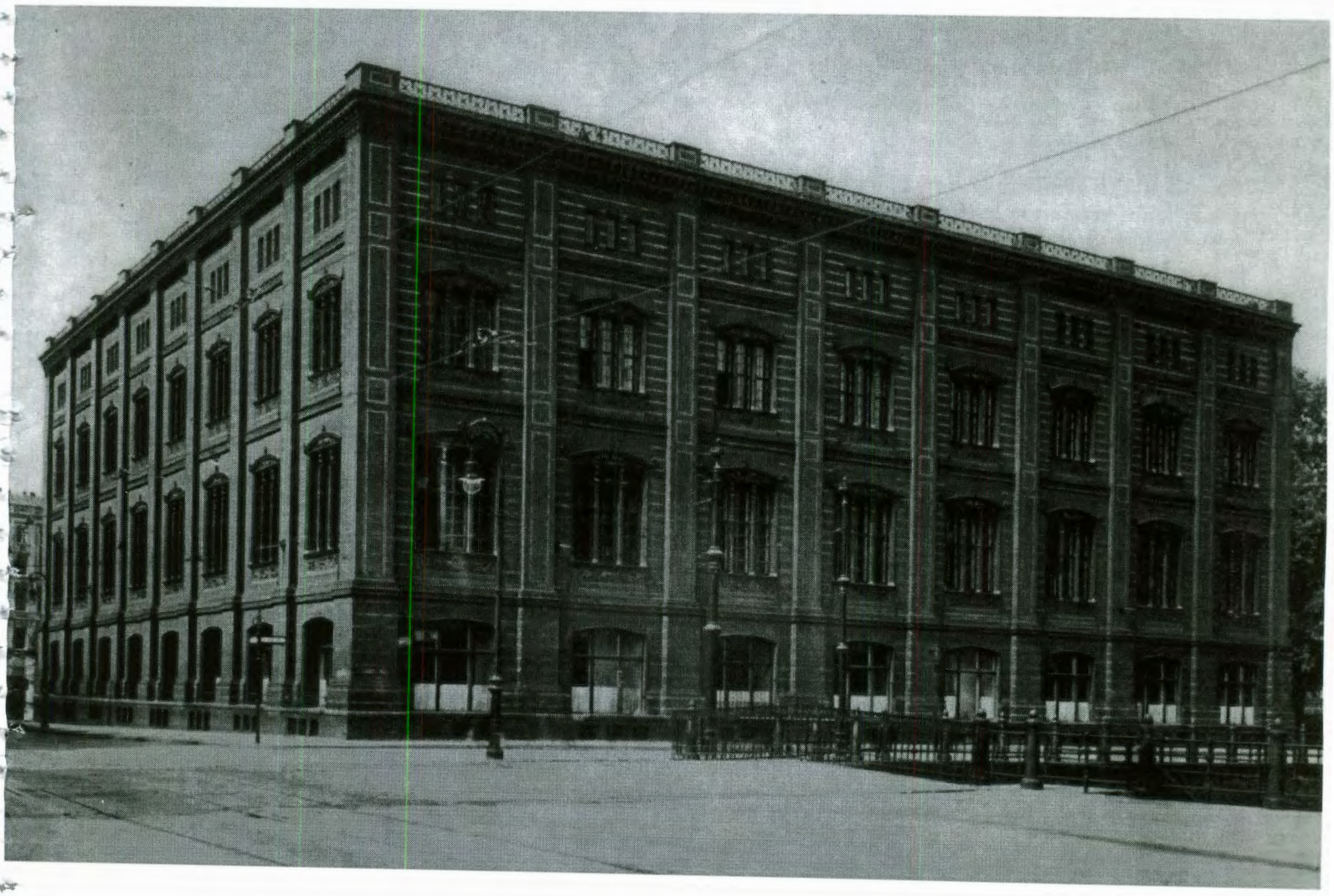
Schinkel, Bauakademie. Perspective endraving from the Schlossbrucke, also showing the Friedrich-Werdersehe Church



Bauakademie, site plan

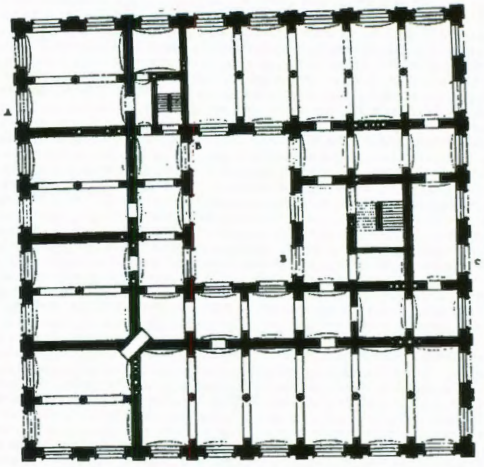
In the accompanying text to his design proposal, Shinkel suggested the new building be an integral part of the formal composition of the market square. Pushed to the end of the long triangular site cleared along the river, the new Bauschule would create an ampler and more regular alignment for the haphazardly shaped Werdersche square to the west. Shinkel proposed that the houses bordering Markt Strasse on the north be set back and that those facing onto the square adjacent to the church be remodelled in order to conform to the formal character of their [important] location.[4] The houses next to the Bauakademie (marked *F* on the plan) were to be razed in order to assure that the Werdersche-Markt would "attain its final completion."[5] The building would be approached across a tree-lined park, from the market square, and by the Schleusen Brucke from the other side of the Spree. Clearly, Shinkel aimed to complete the public landscape and turn the design of the Bauakademie into a comprehensive urban master plan.

The single freestanding building of the Bauakademie, which housed both the school of architecture and the offices of the Oberbaudeputation, was given a monumental appearance. Square in plan, it was wrapped around an internal courtyard--sized only to light the adjacent studios--and its four facades, marked by excessive windows, were astonishingly identical. The Bauschule did not have a clear front: the entrance side of the building was marked by twin doors with no single grand entrance. The building created an impressive and noble effect as a massive structure.

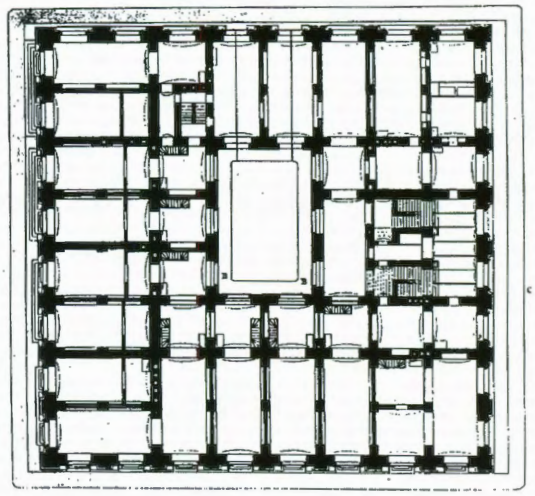


Bauakademie, view from northeast

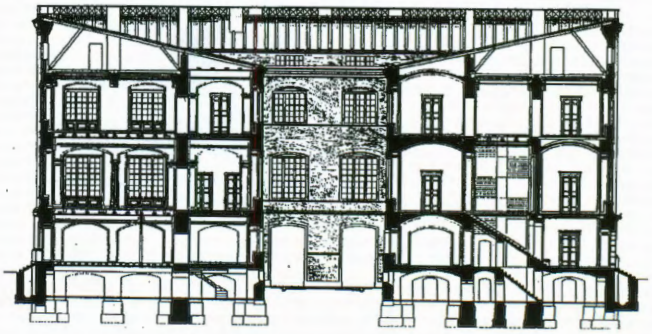
The Bauschule was constructed entirely out of brick. The colossal brick piers, encompassing all four floors, formed a regular structural grid, tied up horizontally by a network of iron clamps. The entire skeleton of vaults and piers was then "dressed" with exterior brick walls which reveal every detail of the building's internal frame. By doing so, Schinkel was trying to minimize the tension between the building structure and its artistic representation. Extensive window areas, horizontal brick bands, and vertical projecting piers reflected the scale of the individual stories and the intervening floors; ninety six identical window bays replicated repetitive nature of the particular brick frame construction. Thus every form of the building derive from the direct elaboration with its internal structure. The decorative terra-cotta relief panels--picturing "various moments in the history of the development of the art of the building" and installed under the sills of the first-floor windows--were to be understood as integral part of the same structure of the building, where, Shinkel believed, the next generation of Prussian architects was to be trained.



Second floor plan



Ground floor plan



Section

The work was accepted differently by Schinkel's contemporaries. The architect was criticized for his "rationalism" and the break from Classical design tradition. However, the Bauakademie was far from being merely an expression of rationalist simplicity. As a statement of urban and building design, the Bauschule transcended historical sources, achieving the first fully original building in Shinkel's career. As Friedrich Adler, Shinkel's contemporary, commented:

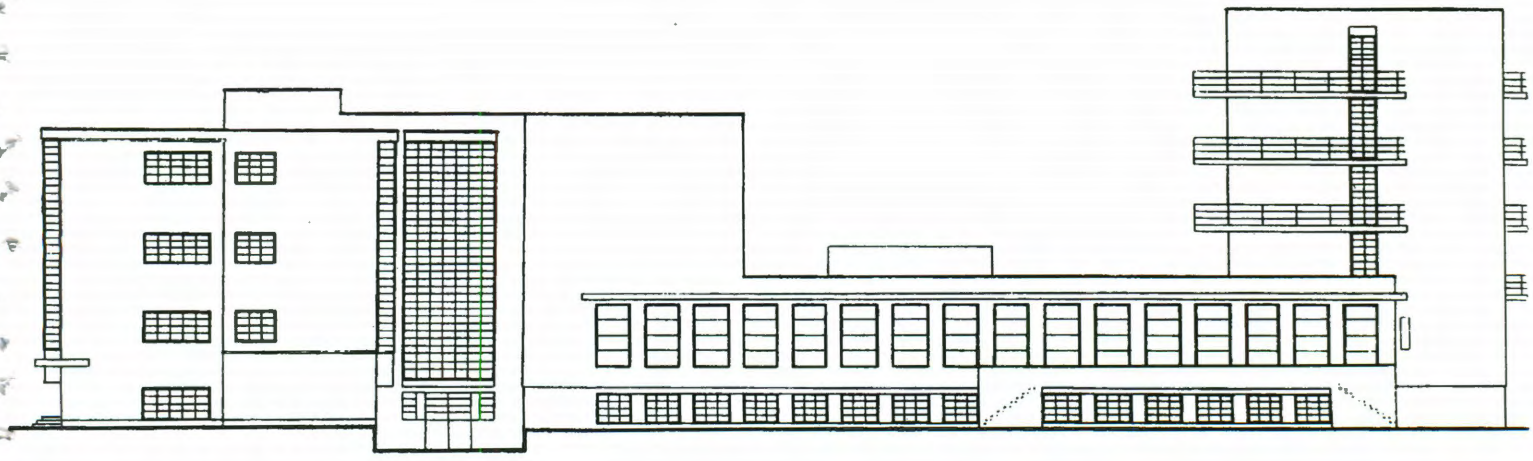
It was and still is a great original work. It belongs neither exclusively to antiquity, nor even less to the middle ages or to the Renaissance. It reveals the transcendence of any narrow historical attachment; it is like a grain of seed (ein Samenkorn), which promises further organic unfolding.[6]

Bauakademie, view from Schinkel-Platz

Bauhaus, Dessau

It occured in Germany in the early years after the First World War where the idea to integrate arts and engineering under the roof of a single institution became fully articulated. The fusion of creative ability, enthusiasm, and intense study has brought to life the school that has had enormous influence on the development of art culture and building design all around the world. The celebrated Bauhaus, established in 1919 by Walter Gropius, has immediately identified its own territory of intervention and became both reality and utopia in the history of design and design education.

The intention of the school, expressively fleshed out in the Bauhaus Manifesto, underlined the scope of preliminary issues of the 'old art schools' and set forward the program, aimed to achieve a new harmony in architecture through amalgamation of art and craftsmanship. "Building," as it was stated in the Manifesto, is "the ultimate aim of all creative activity... The decoration of buildings was once the noblest function of fine arts, and the fine arts were indispensable to great architecture. Today they exist in complacent isolation, and can only be rescued from it by the conscious co-operation and collaboration of all craftsmen. Architects, painters and sculptors must once again come to know and comprehend the composite character of a building both as an entity and in terms of its various parts."[7]



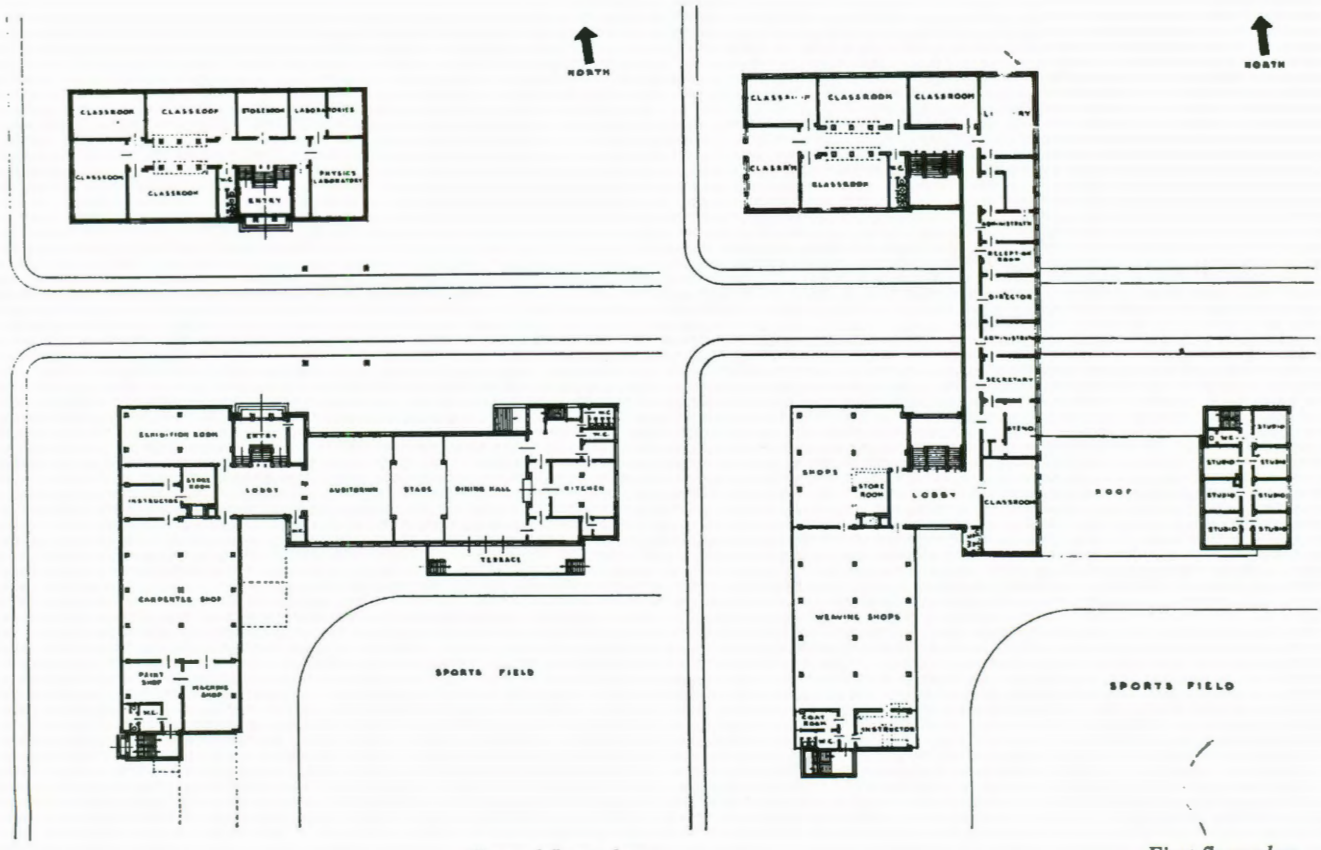
South elevation

A modern building should derive its architectural significance solely from the vigour and consequence of its own organic proportions. It must be true to itself, logically transparent and virginal of lies or trivialities, as befits a direct affirmation of our contemporary world of mechanization and rapid transit. The increasingly daring lightness of modern constructional methods has banished the crushing sense of ponderosity inseparable from the solid walls and massive foundations of masonry. And with it disappearance the old obsession for the hollow sham of axial symmetry is giving place to the vital rhythmic equilibrium of free asymmetrical grouping.[8]

The vitality of space, closely related to that of materials, seems to be Gropius' main concern about the future of building design. The multiform complex of the Bauhaus in Dessau rigorously breaks with the space conception of previous centuries and crystallizes the vision of the new. The 'rotary movement' of the ground plan gives almost an infinite spatial extension to the structure; its dynamic layout implies a multiplicity of visual axis over the fixed symmetrical ordering. There is no 'main' facade to the building and, as a result, there is no need for any 'representational' function that goes with it: the masterly balanced play of volumes underlines the wholeness and coherence of the overall construction. The use of steel, glass and concrete determine the spatial and visual transparency of the built structure. "A breach has been made with the past, which allows us to envisage a new aspect of architecture corresponding to the technical civilization of the age we live in," Gropius stresses in The New Architecture and The Bauhaus; "the morphology of dead styles has been destroyed and we are returning to the honesty of thought and feeling."[9] The artistic goal was expressed in its very practical premises.

View from southeast

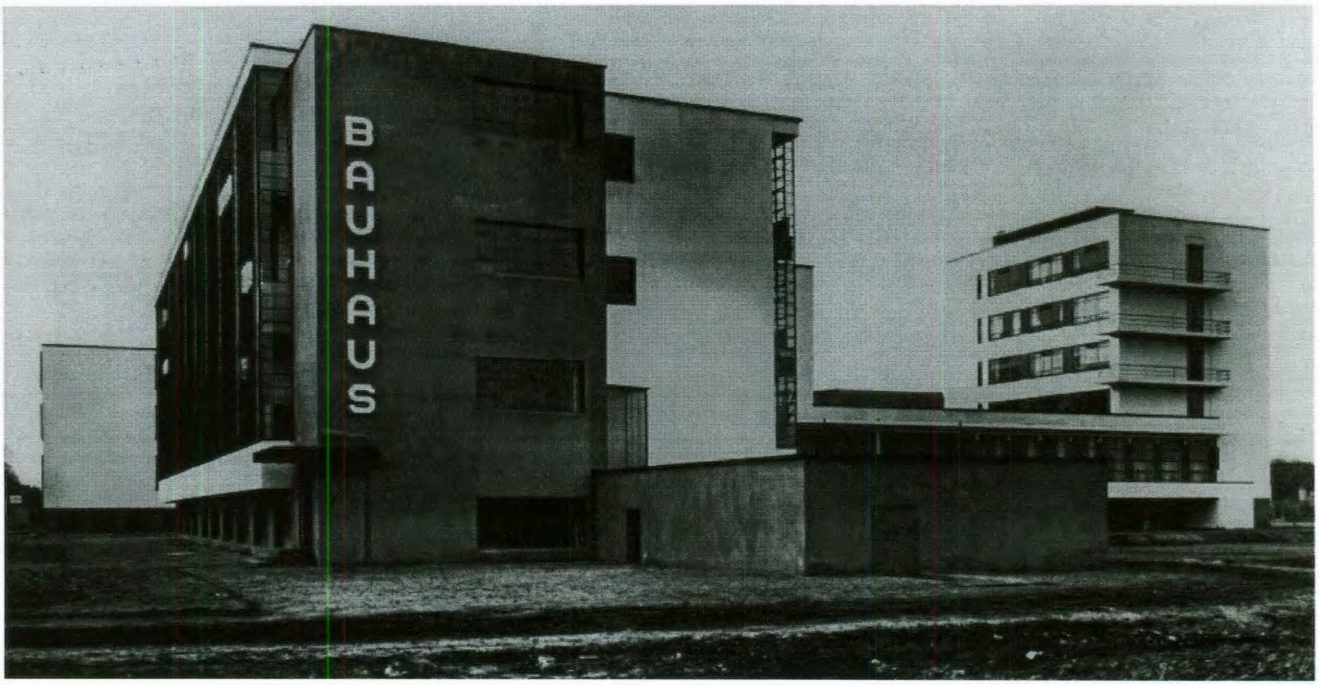
The site for the new school in Dessau was chosen to be two kilometers from the city center on Friedrichsallee (now Thalman Allee). Gropius decentralized the three main functions of the school: the workshops, the technical school, and the students living quarters into three blocks by centrifugally pushing them away from the imaginable center. He linked the workshops and the technical school by a bridge with administrative offices in it and the technical school with student dormitory by a single-storey arm in which the recreational facilities — theater and auditorium — and the dinning room could be joined together.[10] This produced a structure made up of two L-shaped planes, inter-penetrating and intersecting one another at different levels. Indeed, the very meaning of the school can be found in this complex relationship: the different parts of the building are divided into the various centers of activity — art and education, craftsmanship and production, living and entertainment — spatiously giving a unity to the architectural whole.



Ground floor plan

First floor plan

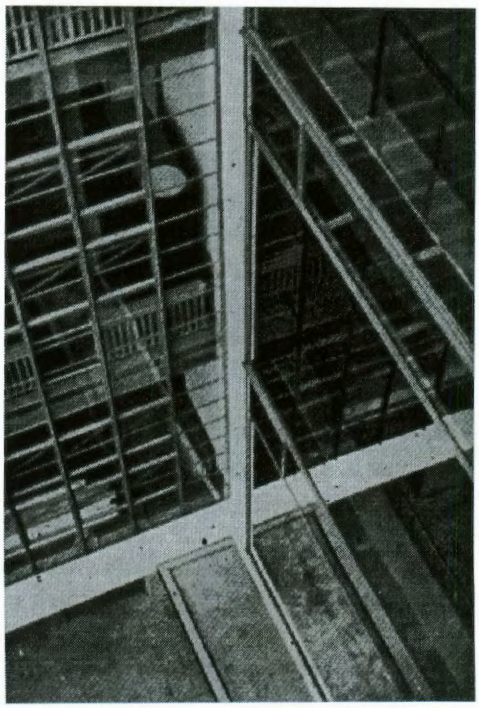
The complexity of Bauhaus design has also another subtext — a modern building opposes itself to the historical precedence. Gropius compared: "A characteristic building of the Renaissance or Baroque has a symmetrical facade, with the entrance on the central axis. The view offered to the spectator as he draws near is flat and two-dimensional." The new Bauhaus, Gropius claimed, eschewed classical models and was thoroughly modern: "A building expressing the modern spirit rejects symmetry and the frontispiece facade. One must walk around this structure in three-dimensional character of its form and the function of its parts."[11] Today one can still walk around the building — pass the cubic block of student dormitories, walk under the link bridge of administrative offices, move by the rectangular volume of the workshop wing — and feel the underlying complexity of its form, as opposed to pure, cool and abstract parts of its composed structure. Although the building is very compact, it appears as mature example of the Neues Bauen, a total work of modern compositional architecture.



View from south

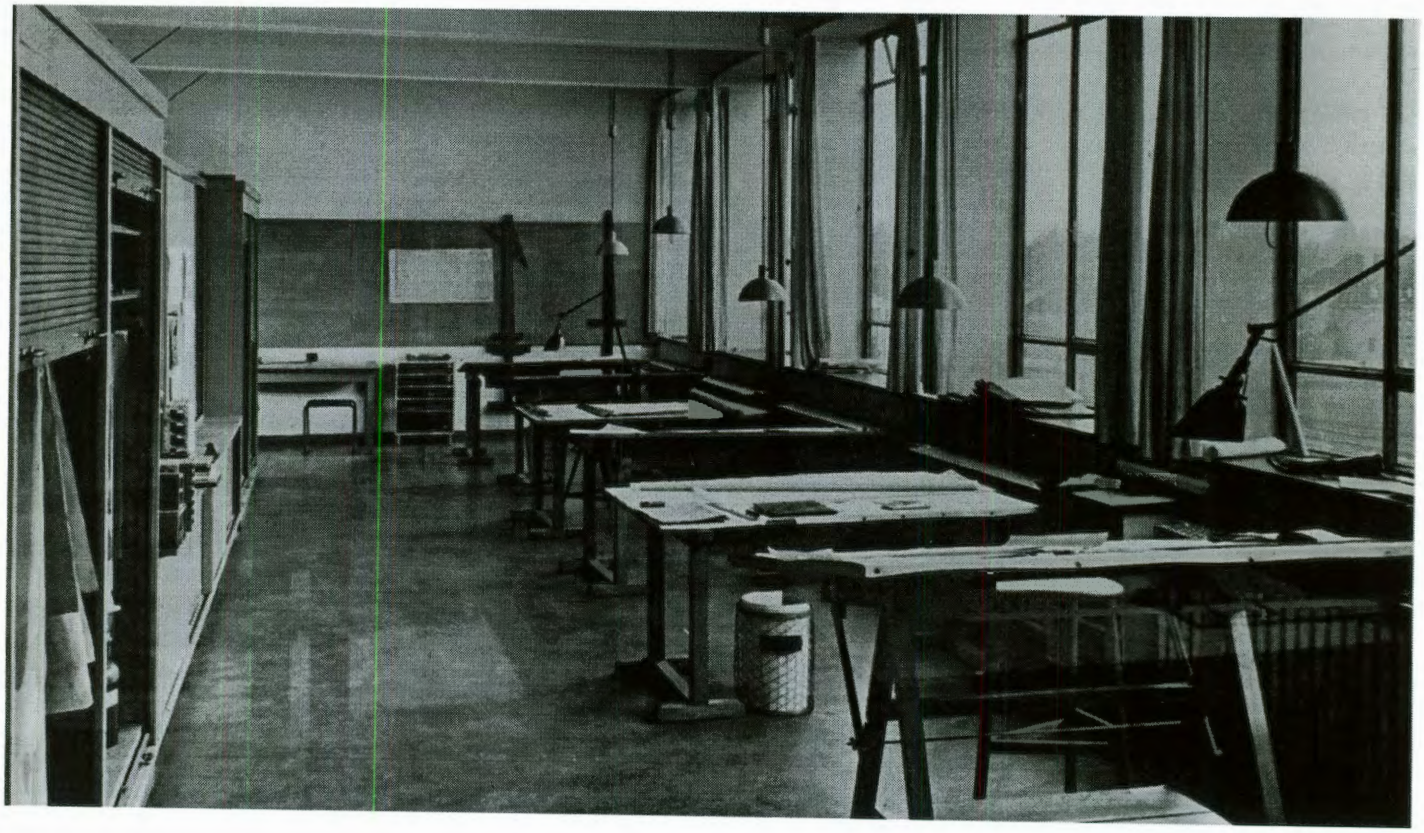
The structure of the building was partly experimental and partly traditional: Gropius used a reinforced concrete frame with 'mushroom' columns and hollow-tile floors on beams, brick masonry with a cement stucco, and steel window-sash with double weathering contacts. The work aspires to be "functional" — i.e. extract its properties directly from that of materials. However, Gropius was striving not only rationalize the use of materials but, also to articulate the function of the building in a way the space is casted and intellectually comprehended.[12] Confined space — open or enclosed — is the medium of architecture. Gropius tries to 'move' the space, set it into a constant flow, perpetual motion inside as well as outside the building.

Perhaps the most interesting example in that respect is the use of glass walls in the Bauhaus school, particularly in the workshop block. The 'screen' membranes, produced by a strong tension between steel and glass, seem to liberate the walls of their traditional separating function. Gropius uses glass as the function of plane, never that of surface. The glass walls flow into one another without any seeming support and produce the illusion of a floating continuity where the infinite outdoor space becomes part of the building interior. Here, for the first time on a large scale, the latest technical developments inform the building design, and altogether with the architect's conception, create an unprecedented work, where "its aesthetic meets [our] material and psychological requirements alike."[13]



Bauhaus, detail of the workshop block.

The interior of the school was executed by the wall-painting and metal workshops of the Bauhaus. In every element of the interior space — light fixture or window frame, staircase railing or door handle — one can read a strong underlying desire to explore and conceptualize a new set of prototypes, ready to inhabit our everyday life. It was also a part of a program, its ability to regenerate design from the essentially correct analysis of the relation between design and production in the industrial world.



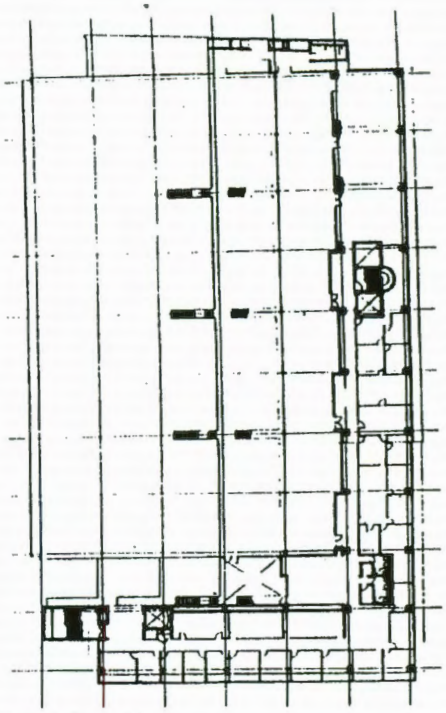
The original studio layout in the architectural section

GSD, Harvard University, Cambridge (MA)

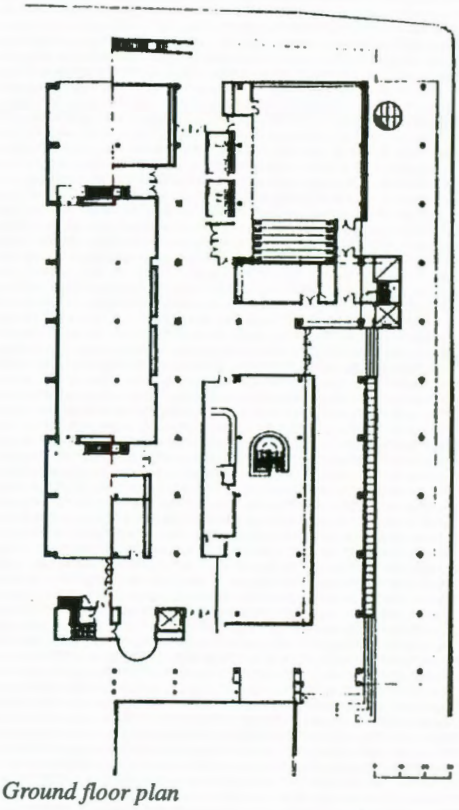
Opening of the George Gund Hall (October 1972) brought, for the first time, the Harvard Graduate School of Design under one roof. Till then, it was housed in five separate buildings.

The design was the realization of former dean Jose Luis Sert's dream of a walless, open studio which would demolish the barriers between design disciplines, and both symbolize and service the dialogue he envisioned.

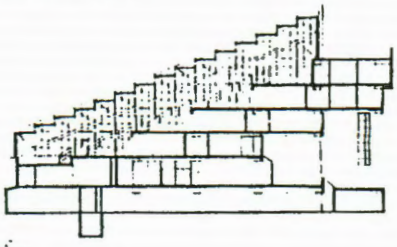
The basic organization of space is simple and clean. It consists of four layers of slabs placed one on top of the other in a step fashion creating an open space on the step of each level. The roof covering the spectacular space in an enormous sawtooth skylight, carried by 9 transverse trusses, 134' long and 11' deep, of tubular elements which incorporate a mechanical system and are exposed over the studio space intended as a tool of design education. Halls, classrooms and faculty offices are tucked deep between the slabs and wrap around the studio on two sides.



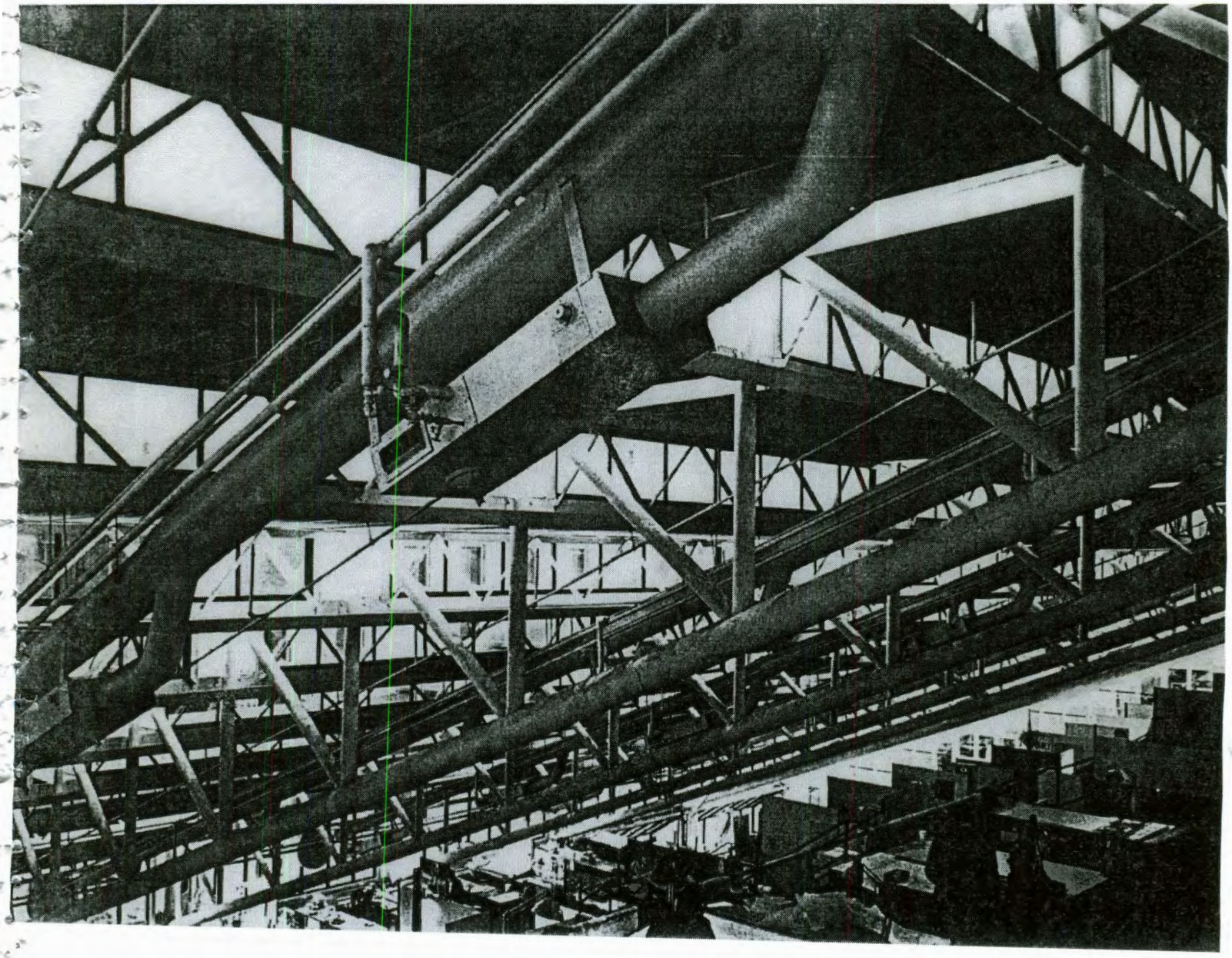
Fourth floor plan



Ground floor plan



Section

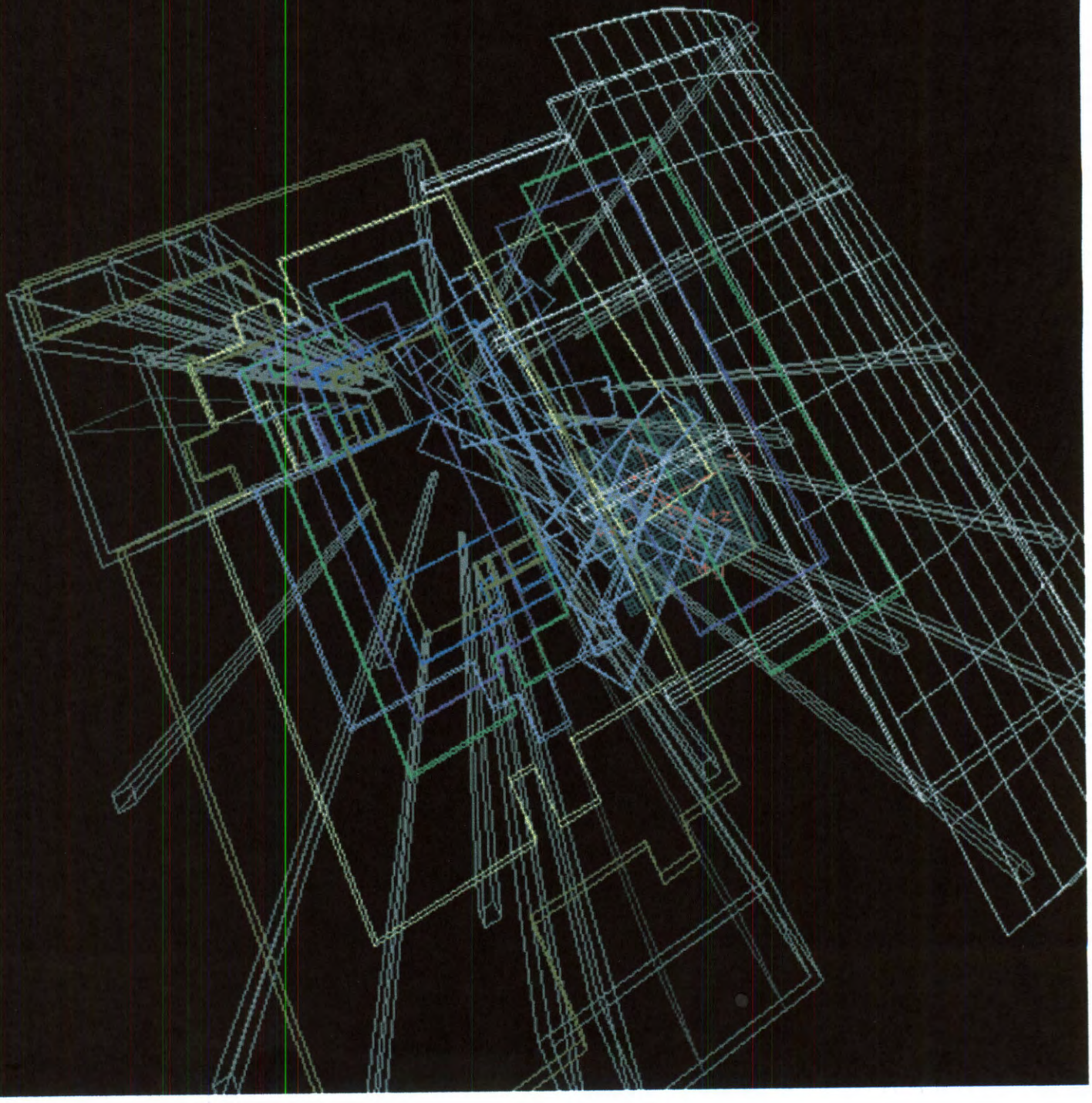


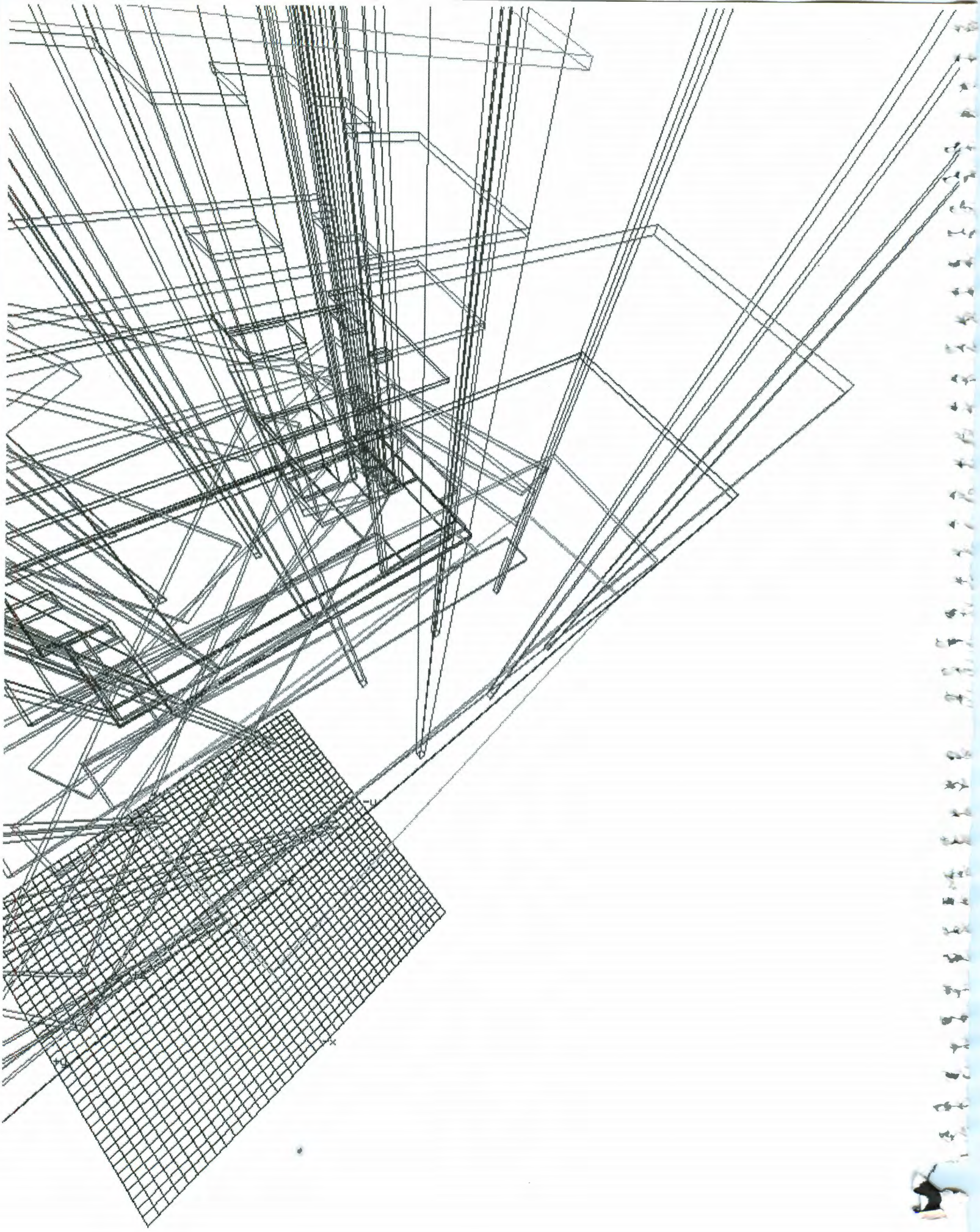
Gund Hall, view of the studio space

The 400 seat auditorium, library and workshop are placed under the studio. On Quincy Street the steps of slabs result in a receeding overhang over the pedestrian walkway and form a canopy over the main entrance to the hall.[14]

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE IN KIEV

design proposal



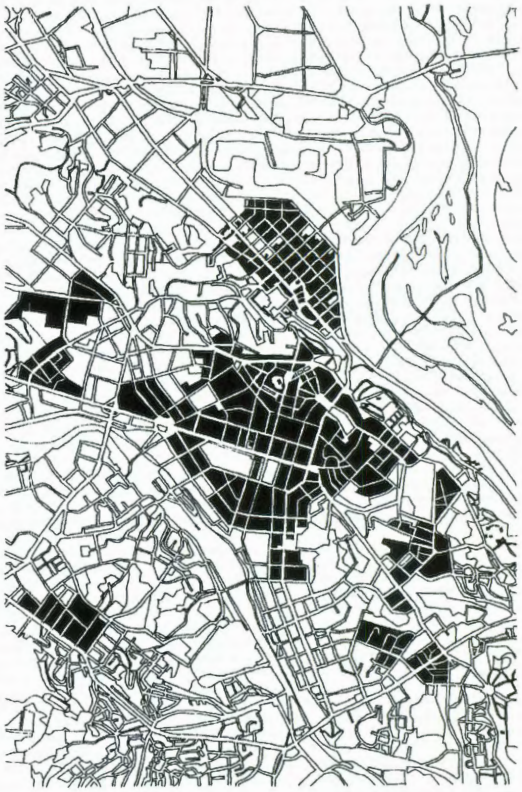


Architectural forms—an order column or a temple plan—carried the message of the past and were believed to portray the meaning and truth of architecture. By adopting increasingly complex programmatic conditions, today's function of architectural forms and images is undergoing radical changes and, like architecture itself, significantly loosing its representational function. External walls, once represented a building and conveyed the meaning to the outer world through their imagery and hierarchy, has been turned into a mere protective screen, an adaptable membrane, wrapped around an internal structure. The transparent surface of the building reveals interior structural and programmatic connections without any exterior representation. Thus the building form, consumed by internal structure, approximates the programmatic content rather than delivers a historical and representational meaning.

It is important to understand that the function of the form confronts its traditional signification and questions the very meaning and importance of the message. The architectural form, identified with a protective envelope, obstructs the reading of the building form inherent in programmatic conditions. Contemporary buildings defined primarily by structural capabilities and programmatic criteria, i.e. exact space dimensions, lighting and climate control, vertical as well as horizontal communications, define their form only through use. This suggests a building without rigid formal structure which poses a challenge inherent in adoption of open, increasingly neutral and flexible programs.

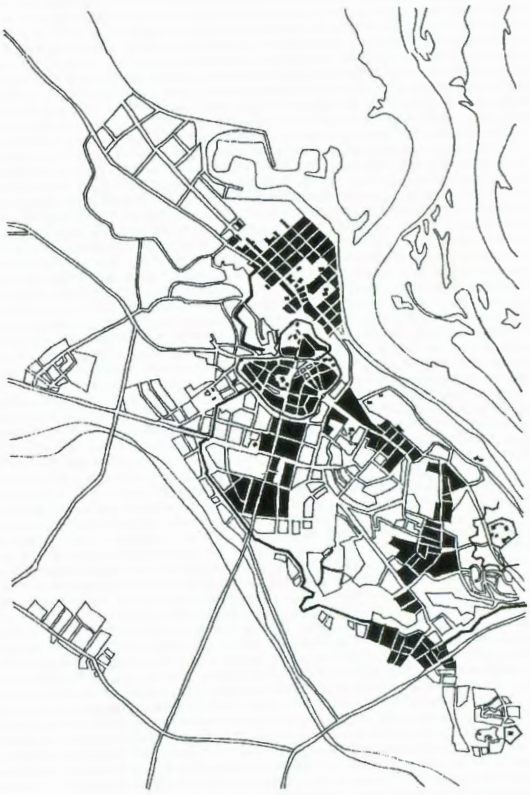
My thesis project—an architectural school—addresses these questions on the old site in the city of Kiev. It deals with the questions of program and site on two levels: urban and operational. Firstly, it poses a critique of the existing urban condition by disrupting the continuos facade of the street and transgressing pedestrian movement into the city block. Secondly, it opens the possibility of interdisciplinary exchange: the proposed building is capable of accommodating school activities as well as those of other institutions, e.g. high school, art gallery, city hall. By doing so the project amalgamates the program of a traditional architectural school (studio and exhibition of artifacts) with such untraditional elements as computer and media arts center. The project presents the school as a laboratory open to investigate affinities within contemporary education of architects.

Kiev. XI century



XX century

XIII century



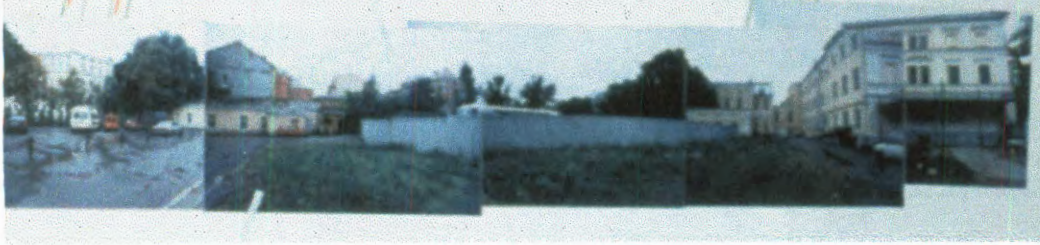
XVIII century

Above: The city of Kiev as it was developed through centuries
Opposite: Diagrams of the design proposal in its urban context

social structure

existing circulation

proposed circulation

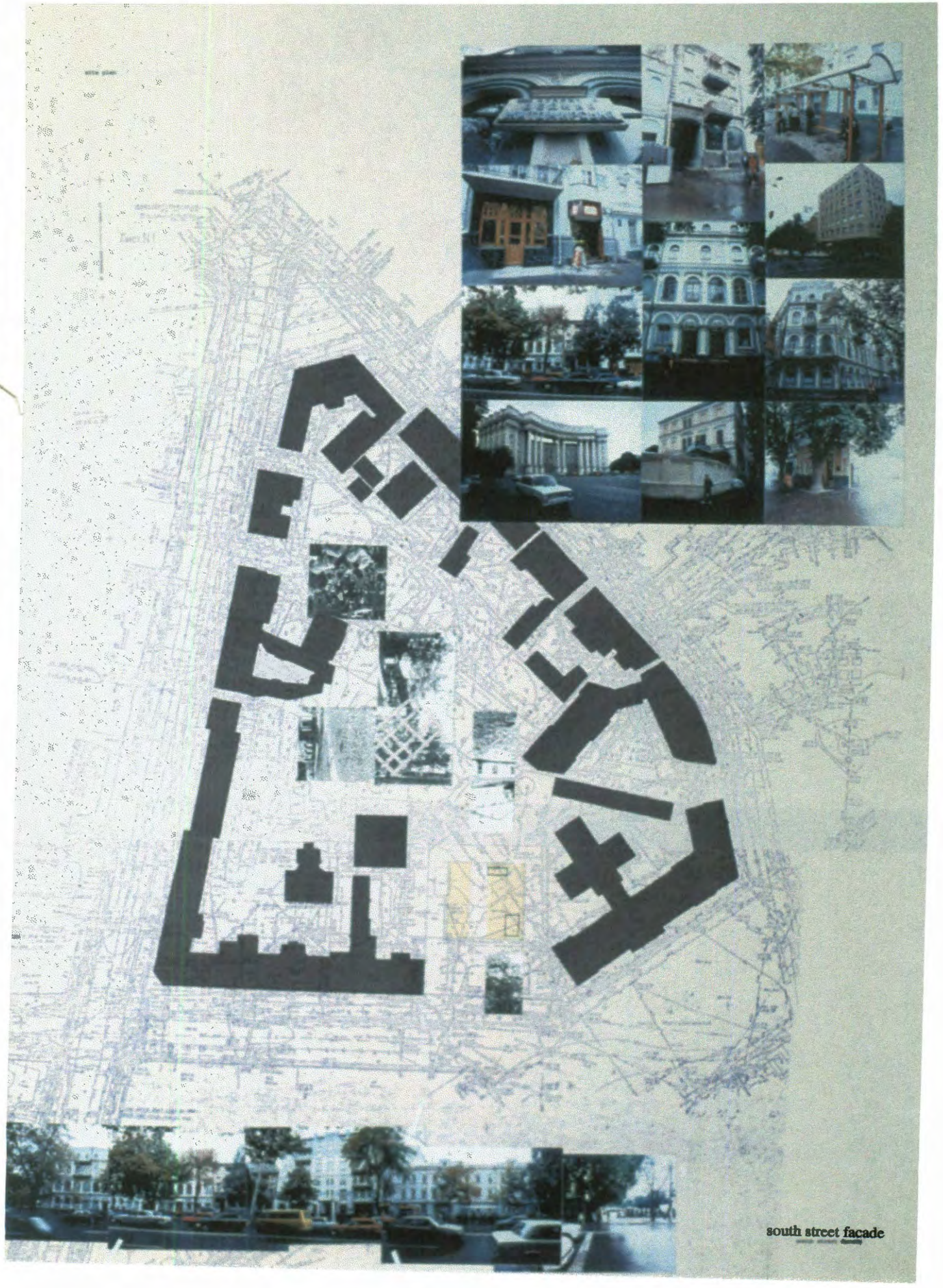


site panorama

The site

The site of the project is one of the oldest settlements of Kiev, and as the city itself, it has been built and rebuilt for almost two thousand years. Despite the fact that this particular site accommodates a wide range of buildings—high school, residential quarter, children's theater, city hall, etc.—it remains a strong homogeneous urban space, constructed in accordance with its general masterplan where all the buildings facing the street were aligned into a continuous facade. As a result of such a plan, pedestrian movement occurs only along the sides of the block and never penetrates the urban quarter itself. Proposed building—school of architecture—has been offset from the street line into the block in order to "open up" the block and initiate pedestrian movement into it. Building also "opens" itself in order to transgress that movement.

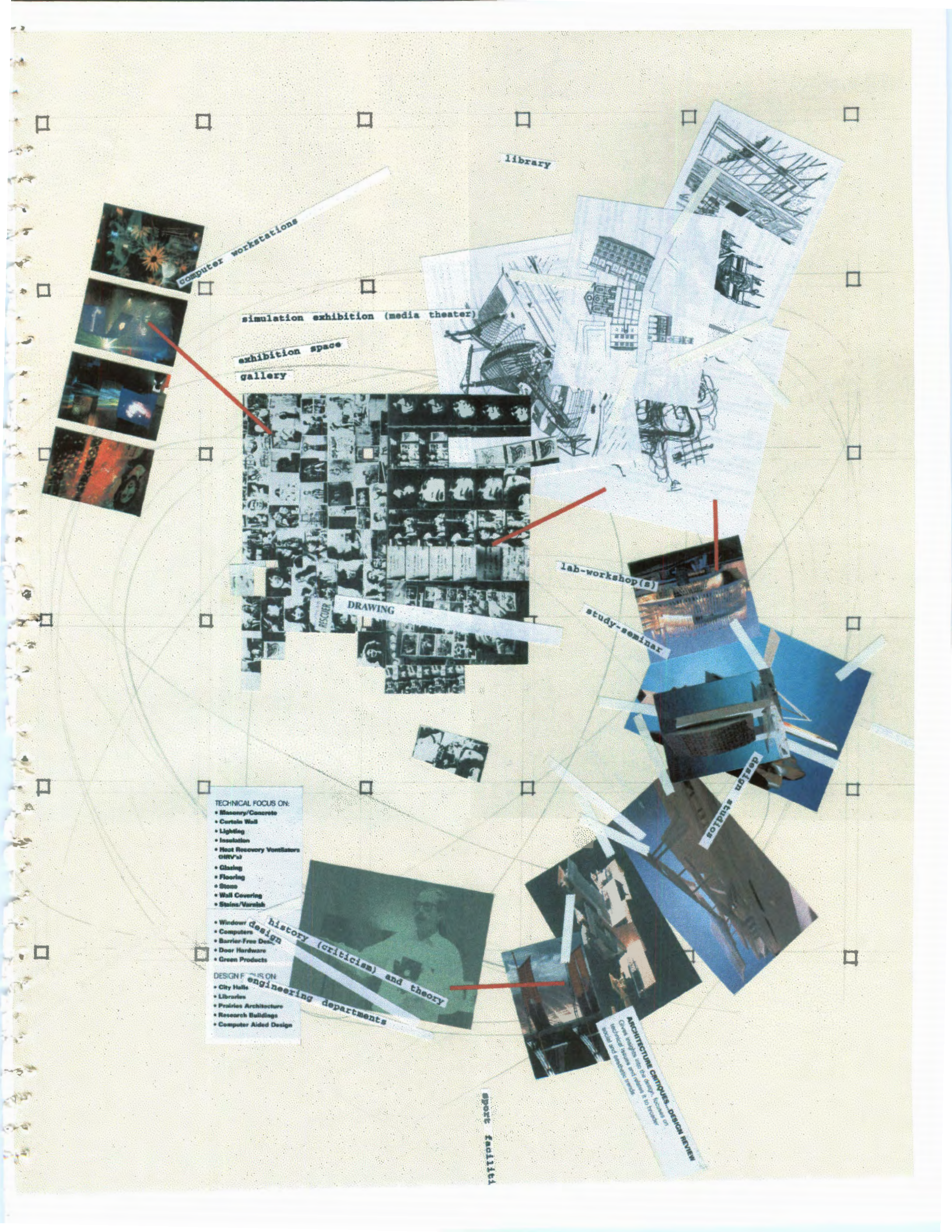
Opposite: Site plan

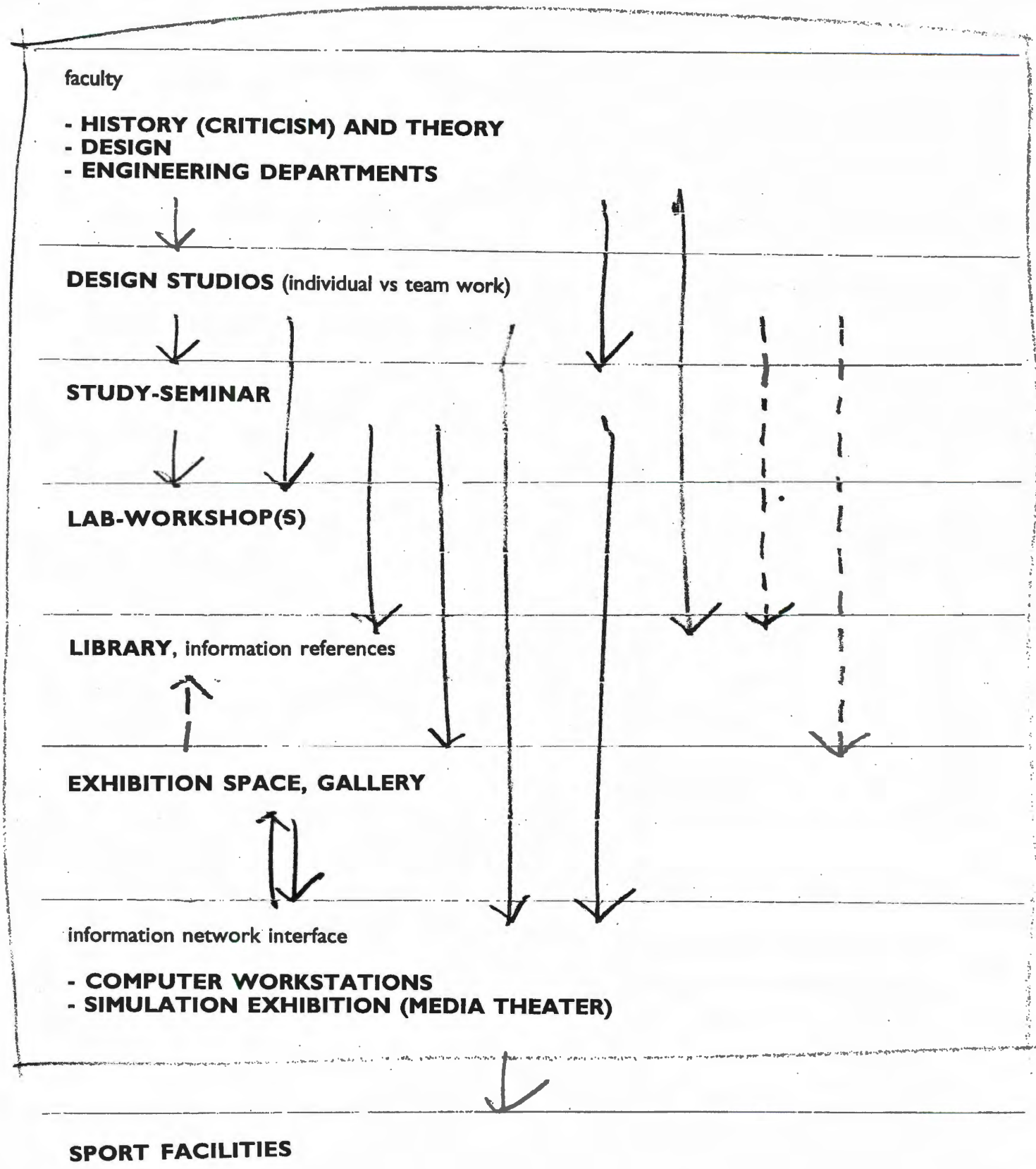

south street facade

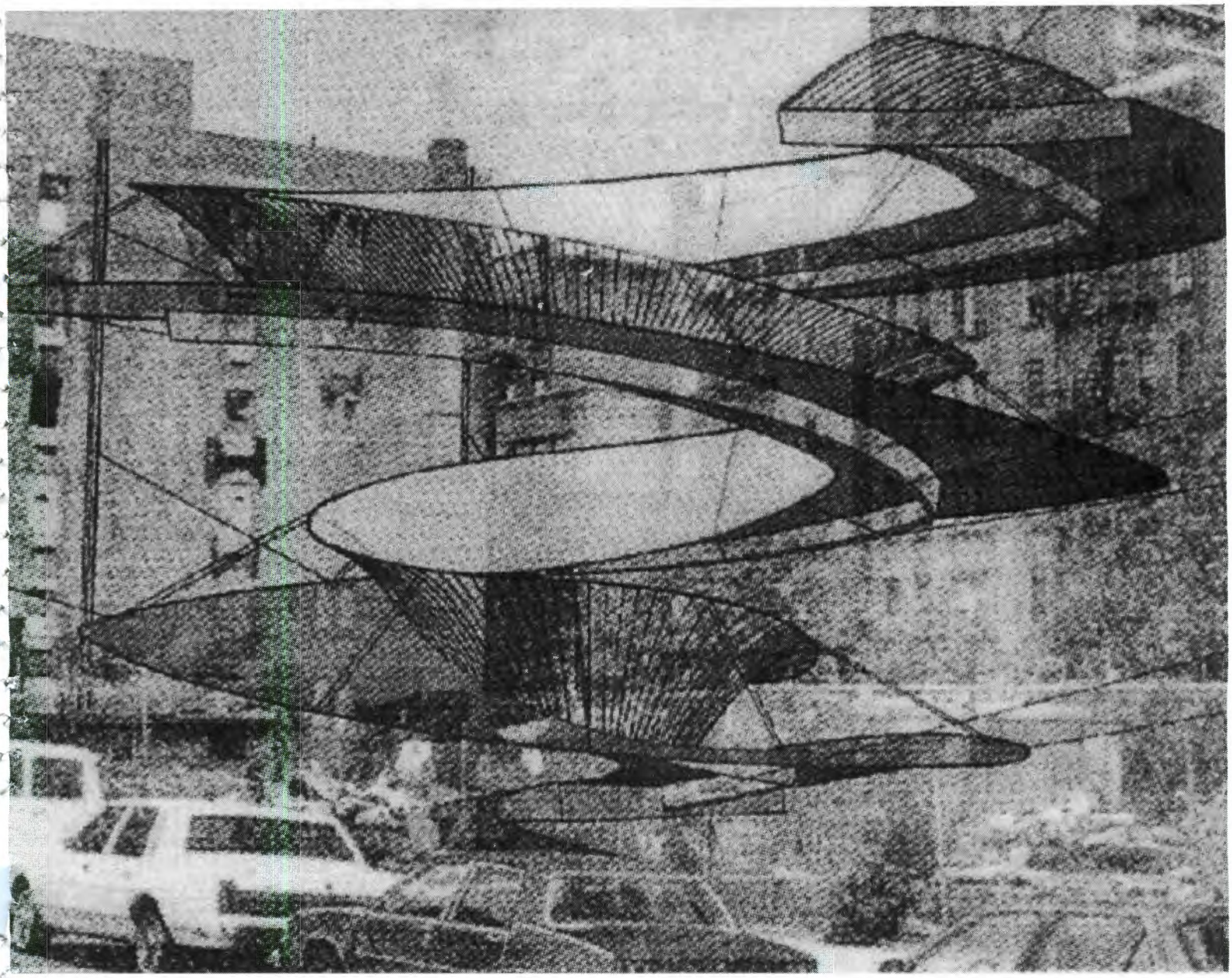
The program

School of architecture brings practice and education of architecture under one roof. In such a condition, the goal of architecture education cannot be predicated neither on a specific set of task-oriented skills, nor on the fields of architectural history and architectural theory only. The school will combine design studios along with building workshops and CAD laboratories. In such a program, studio, theory, and practice learning would be connected, not isolated in unrelated courses.

Opposite: Conceptual model of the program


computer workstations
simulation exhibition (media theater)
exhibition space
gallery
library
DRAWING
lab-workshop(s)
study-seminar
design studios
TECHNICAL FOCUS ON:
• Masonry/Concrete
• Curtain Wall
• Lighting
• Insulation
• Heat Recovery Ventilators (HRV's)
• Glazing
• Flooring
• Stone
• Wall Covering
• Stains/Varnish
• Windows
• Computers
• Barrier-Free Design
• Door Hardware
• Green Products
DESIGN FOCUS ON
• City Halls
• Libraries
• Prairies Architecture
• Research Buildings
• Computer Aided Design
history (criticism) and theory
design
engineering departments
ARCHITECTURE CRITIQUES...DESIGN REVIEWS
space facilities


faculty
- HISTORY (CRITICISM) AND THEORY
- DESIGN
- ENGINEERING DEPARTMENTS
DESIGN STUDIOS (individual vs team work)
STUDY-SEMINAR
LAB-WORKSHOP(S)
LIBRARY, information references
EXHIBITION SPACE, GALLERY
information network interface
- COMPUTER WORKSTATIONS
- SIMULATION EXHIBITION (MEDIA THEATER)
SPORT FACILITIES



The program of the school is distributed along a singular trajectory inside the building. In the context of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century structures, the new school will challenge the very way of the spatial building organization: continuous trail of the building, as opposed to customized floor-by-floor layering, constructs the perception of adaptable space that leaves the possibility of unobstructed interaction between the members of the program. Minimal enclosure inside the school allows for maximum functional freedom within the perimeter of the plan.

In general, the project resulted from the superimposition of *programmatic elements*, *circulation path*, and *structural frame*, wrapped into an enclusive *envelope* of the building.

The program

Design studios, workshops, faculty, flexible exhibition and study space, library, computer workstations and media theater.

Circulation path

Ramps serve as communication and connection between floors. They are also set to accommodate people for different activities (lecture, exhibition, presentation, etc.) *Elevators and fire stairs* serve for emergency evacuation.

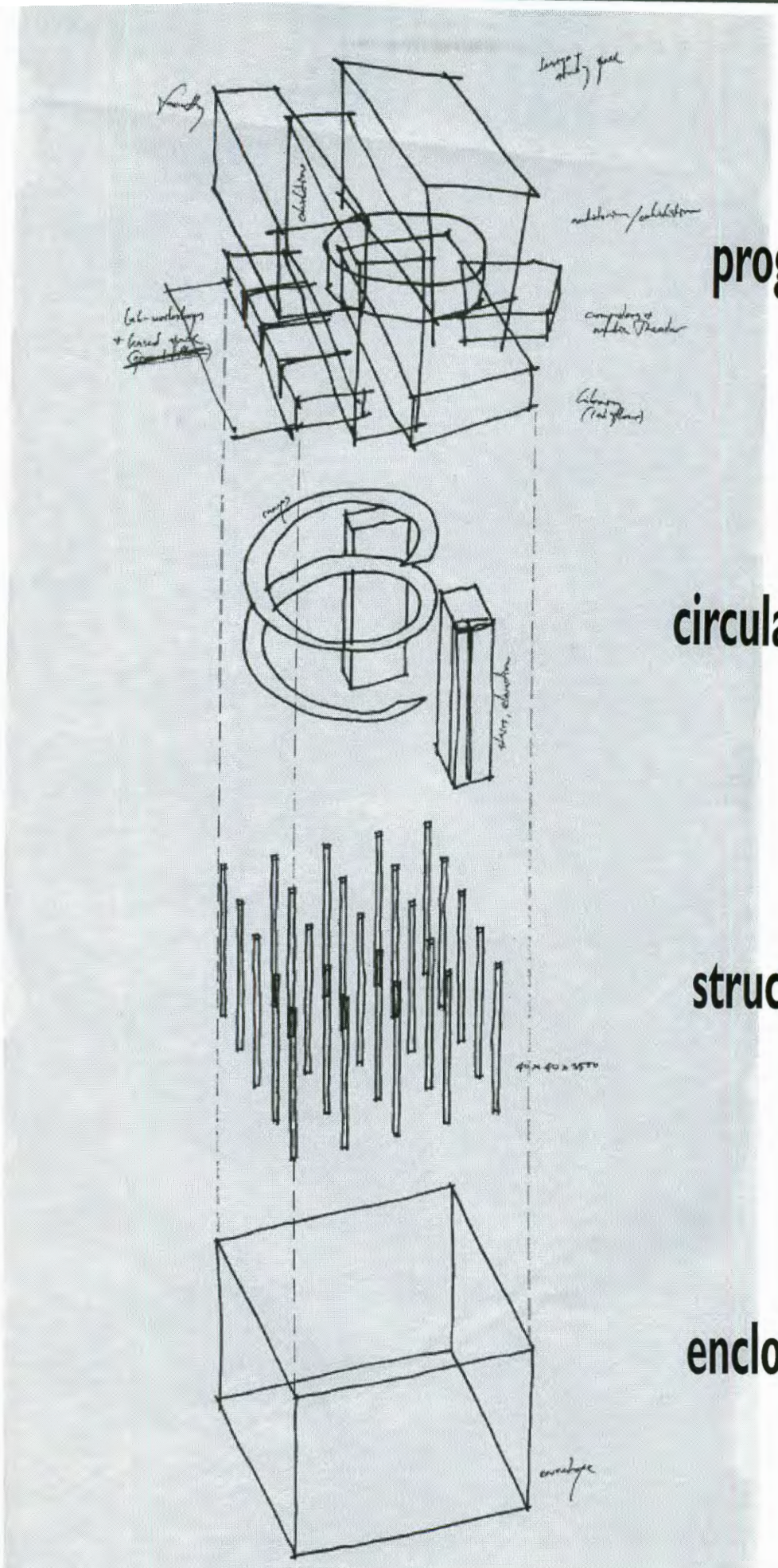
Structural frame

Regular column grid, the constructional matrix of the building, resolves the principal concern about the flexibility of space: the school is designed so that the spaces could be manipulated with ease allowing for programmatic freedom.

Enclosure

Weatherproof membrane—protective envelope of the building—defines building's outer shape.

The building is transformed into a simple *container*, capable of accommodating various activities at different times. Its *architectural* form--exterior elevation--approximates a cube which corresponds directly to the protective envelope wrapped around an internal structure.



program

circulation

structure

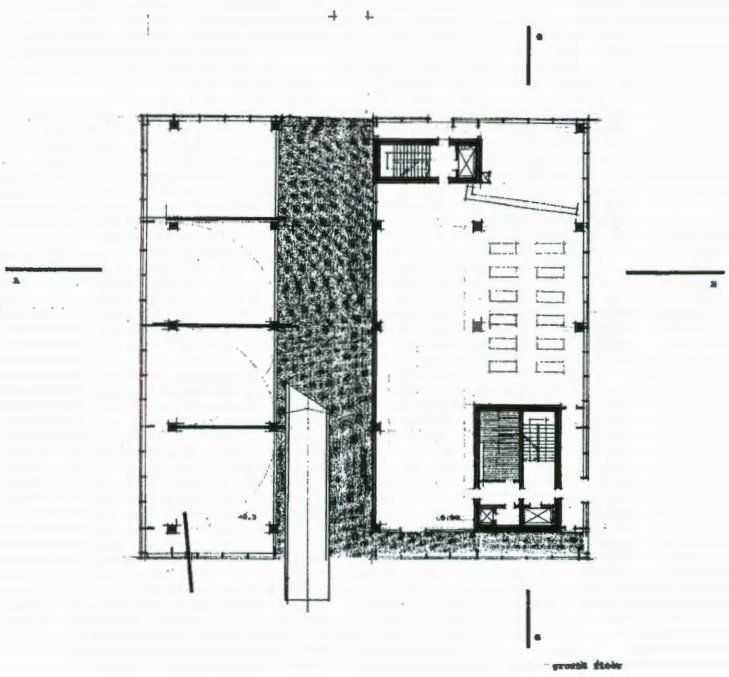
enclosure

workshop

library

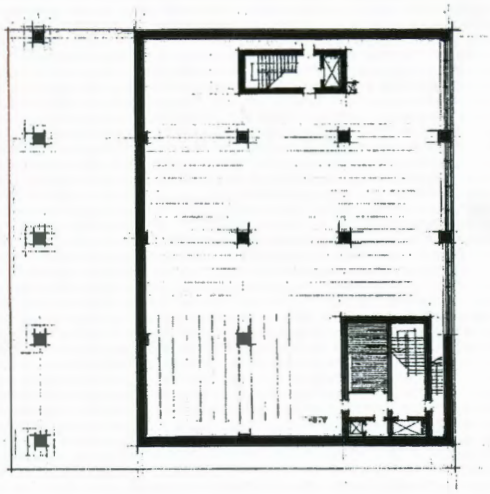
leased spaces

book storage



prostá řídlo

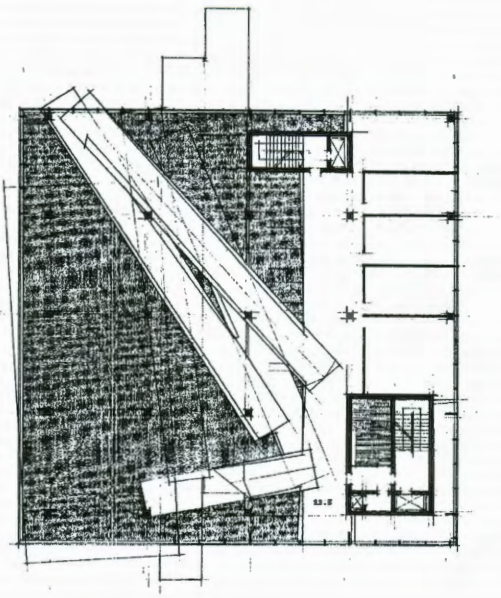
basement

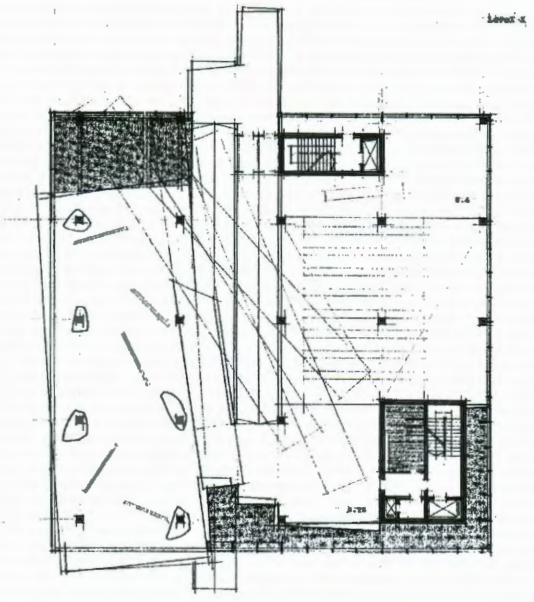


faculty

auditorium/
exhibition space

exhibition space



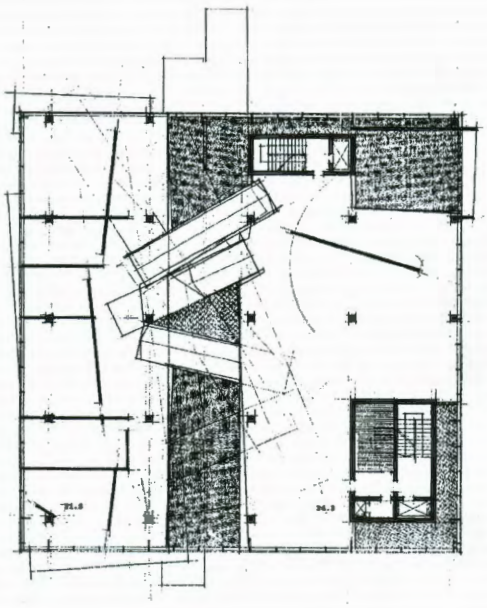


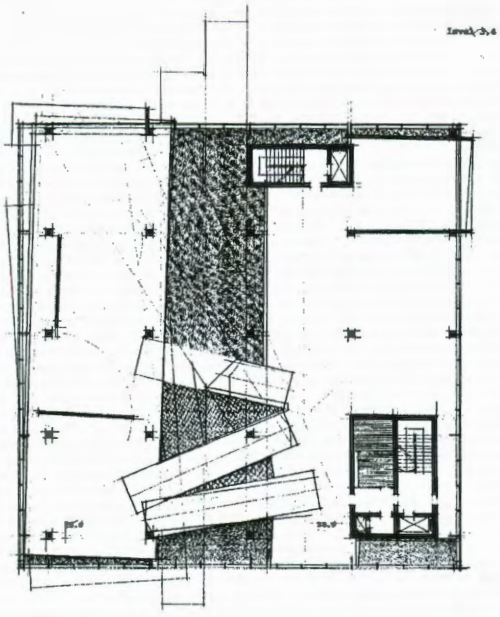
design studios

faculty

computer lab

design studios





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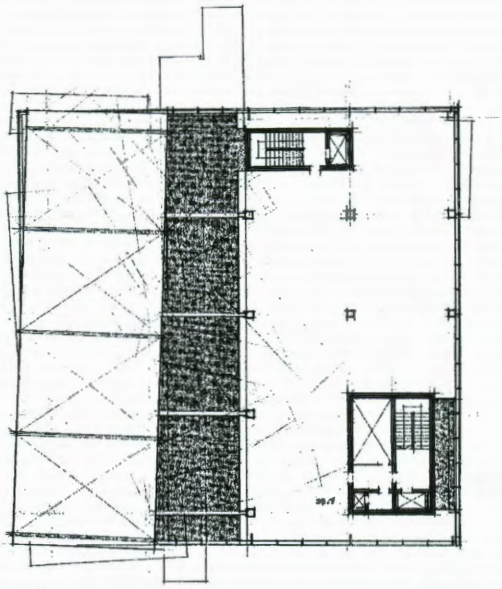
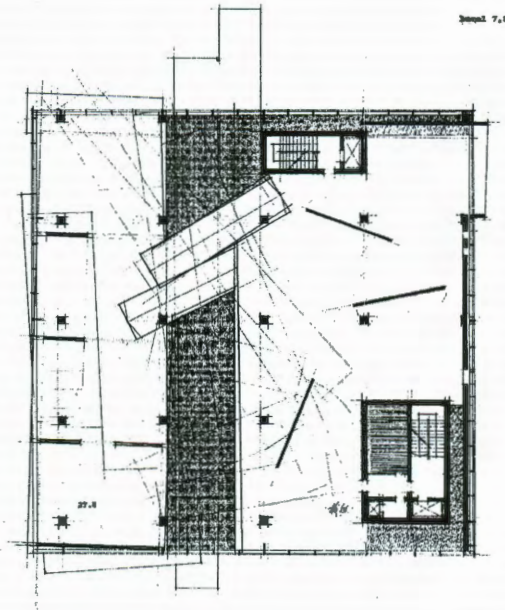
roof

design studios

design studios





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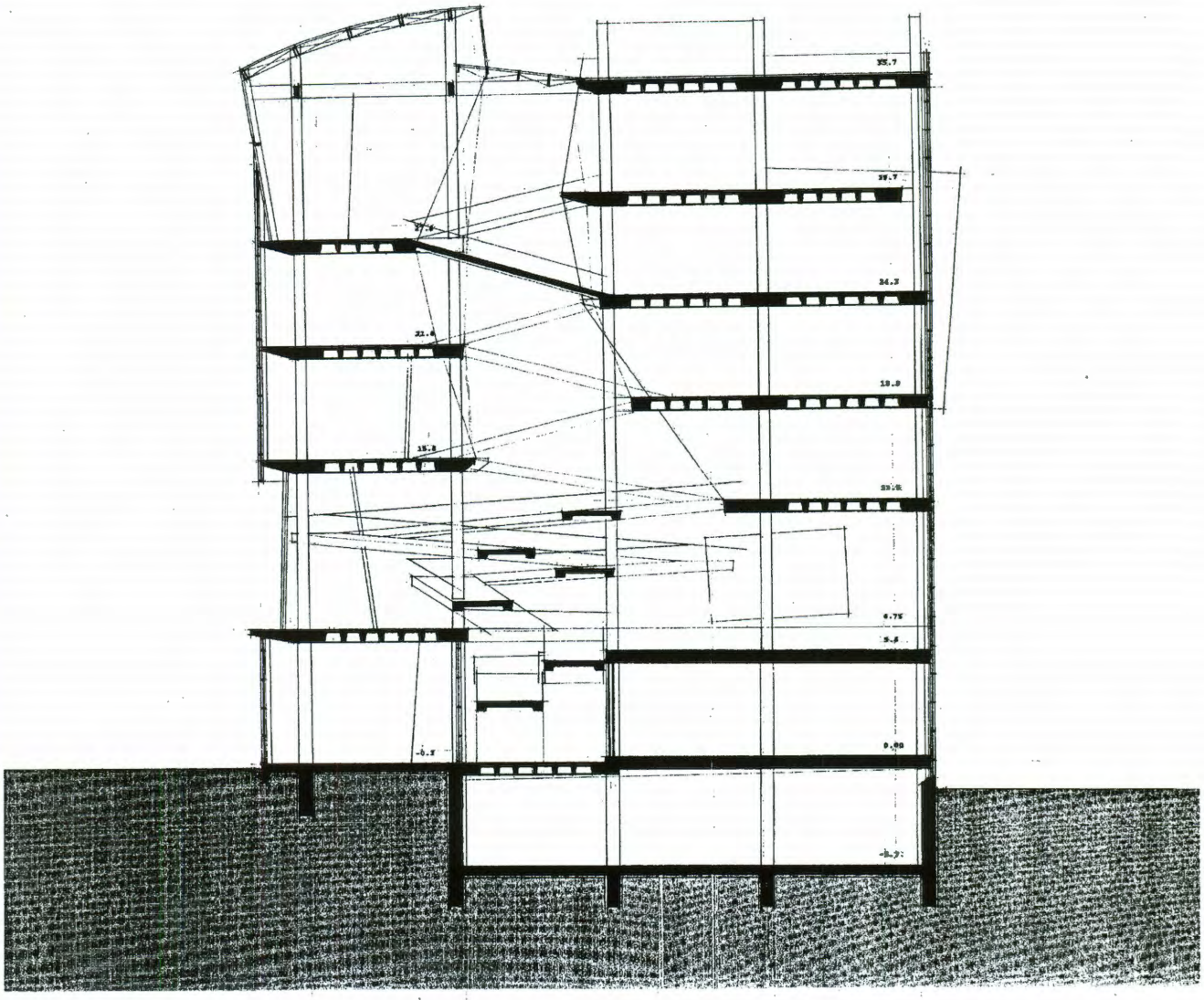

section A-A

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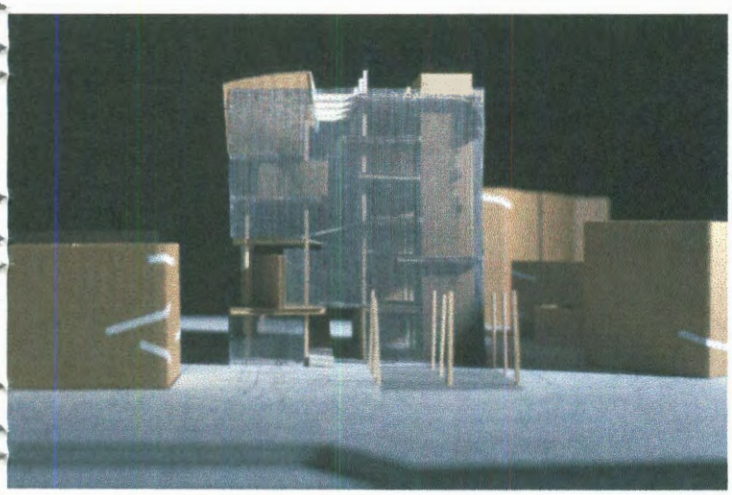
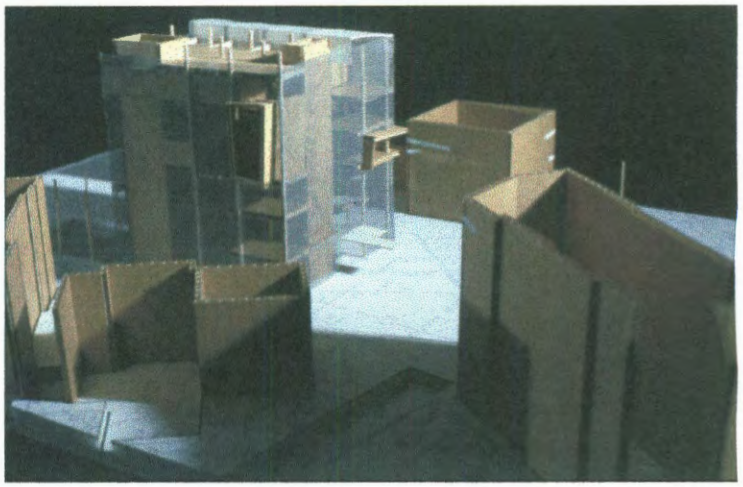
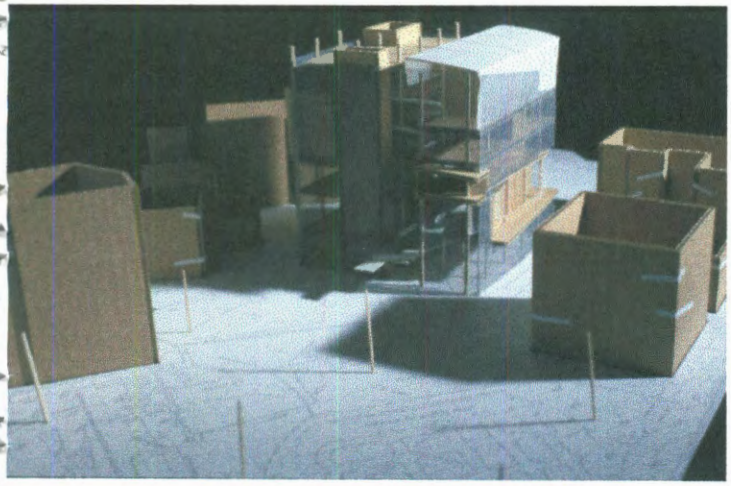
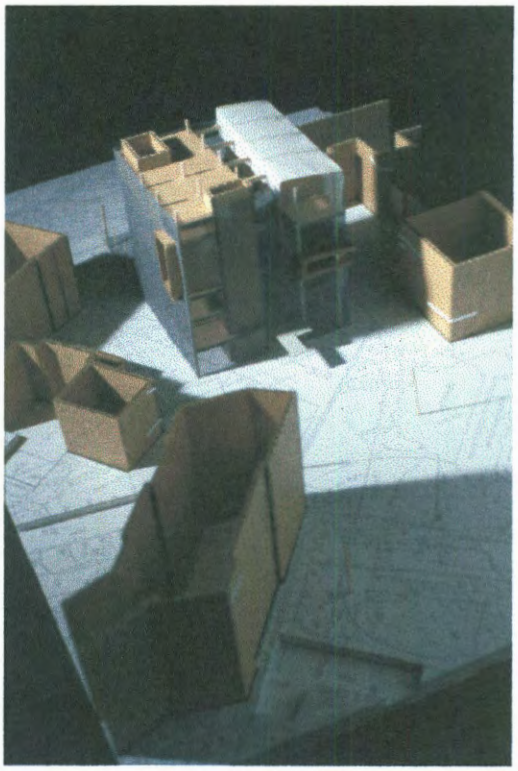
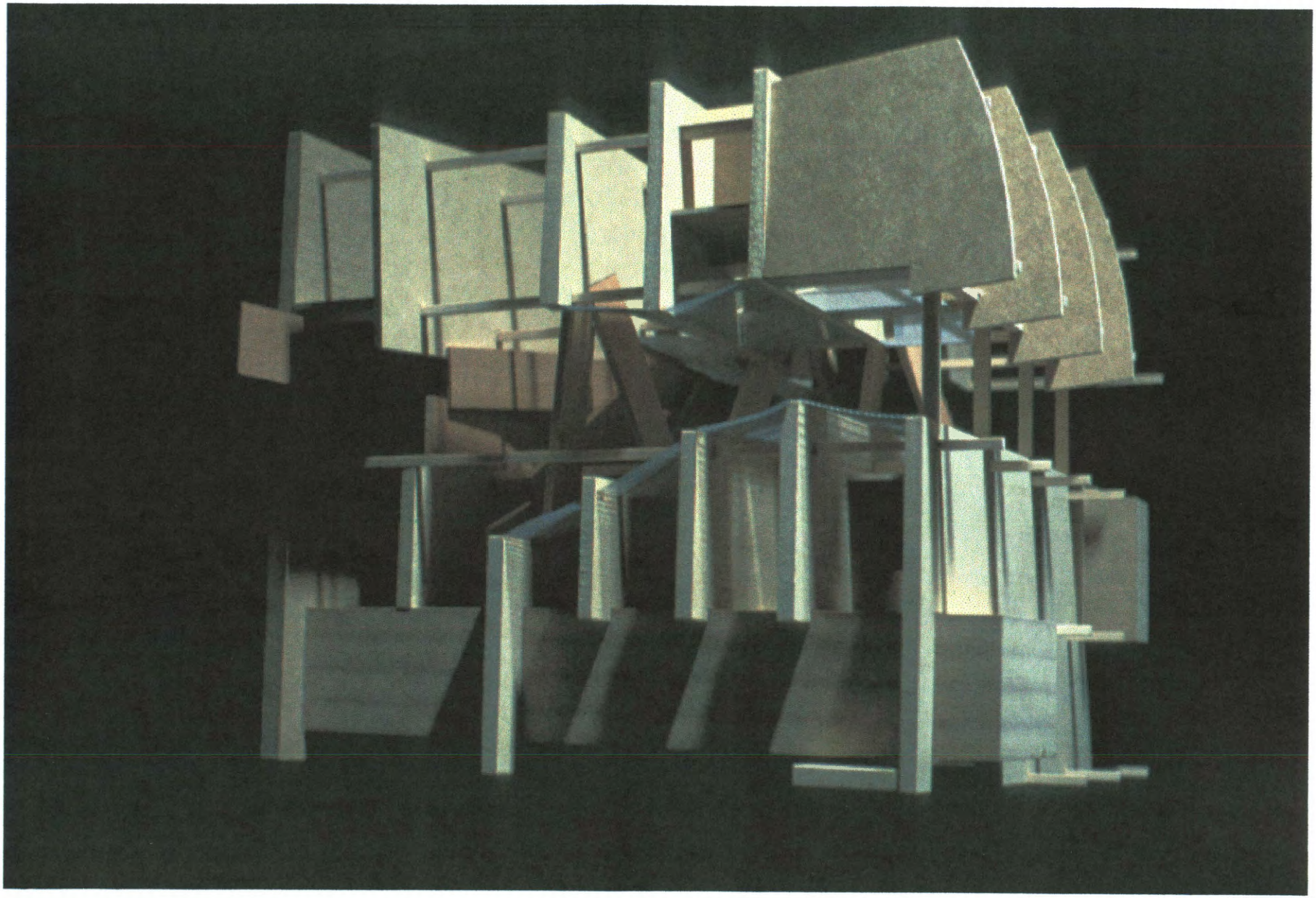


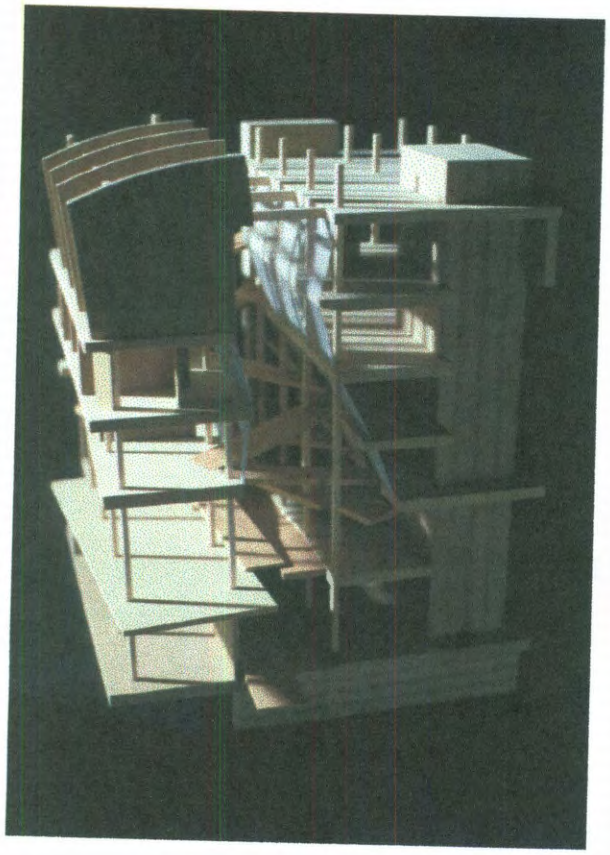


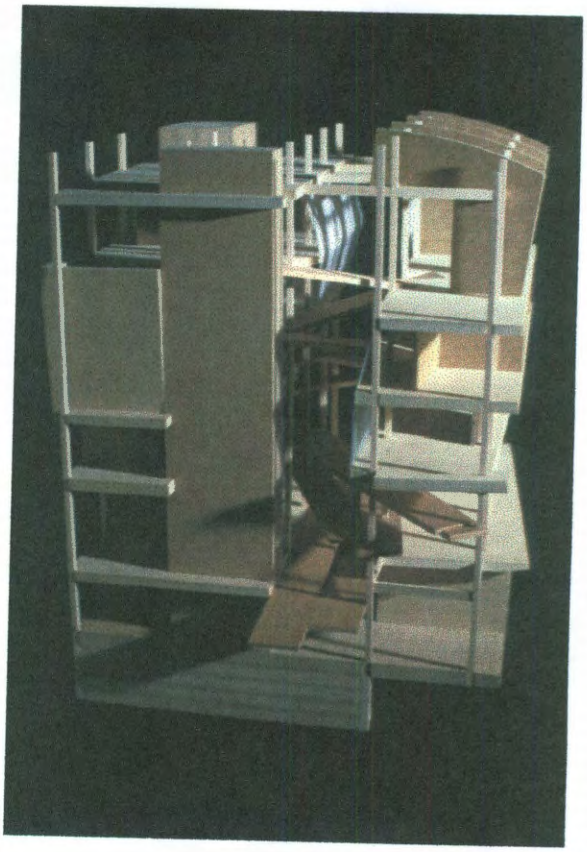


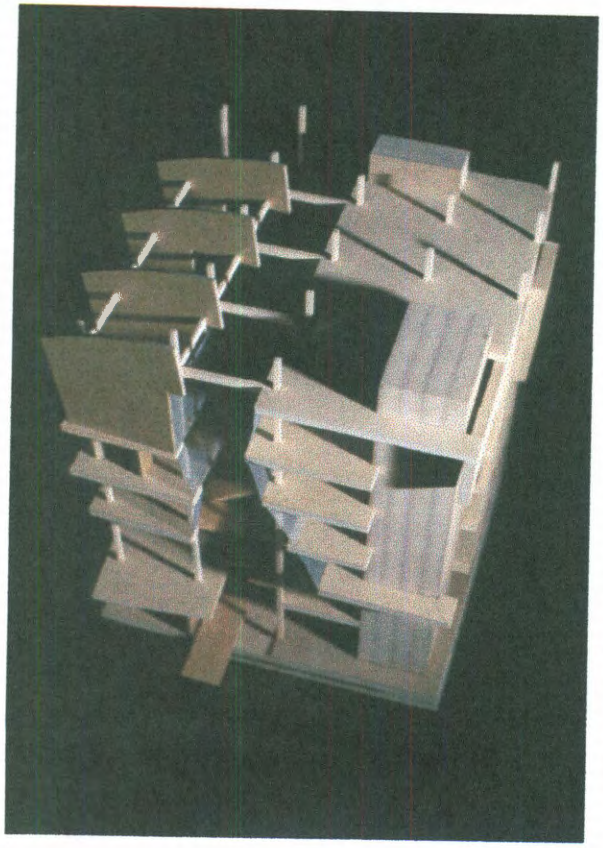


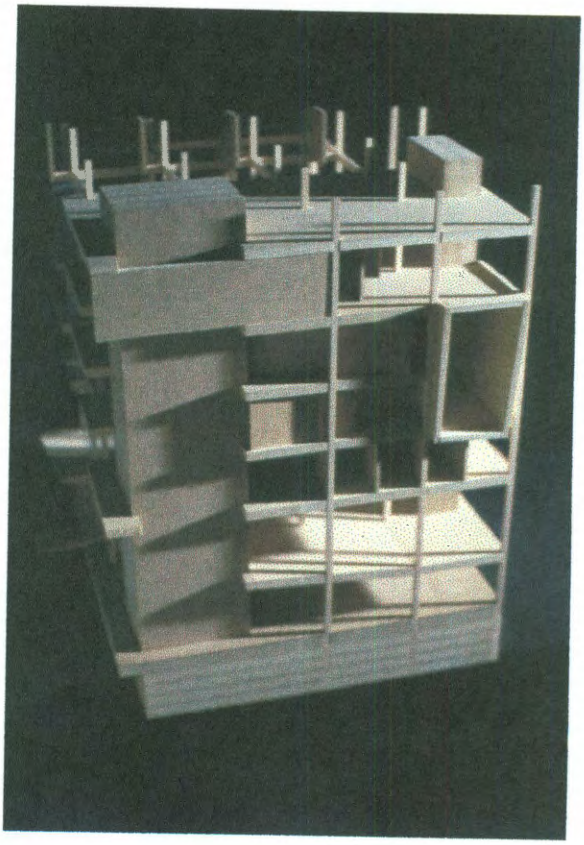
Opposite and above: Context model

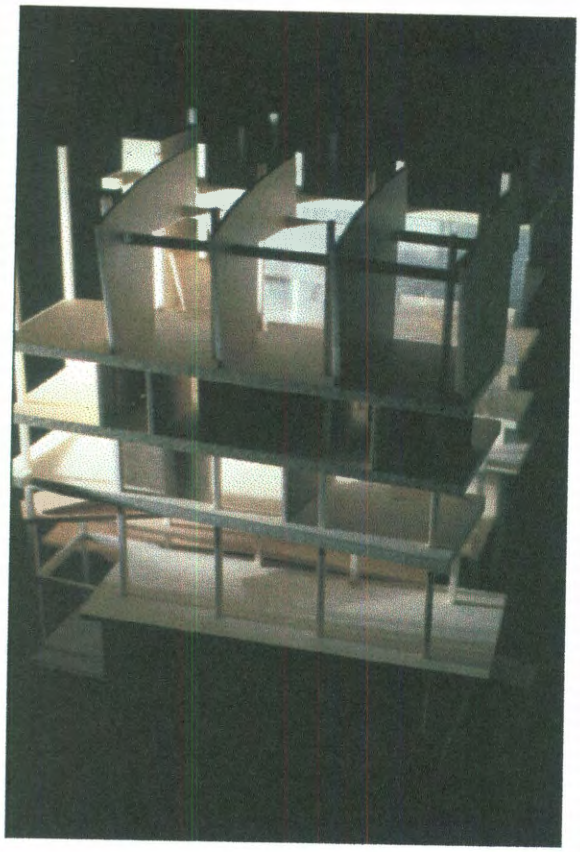


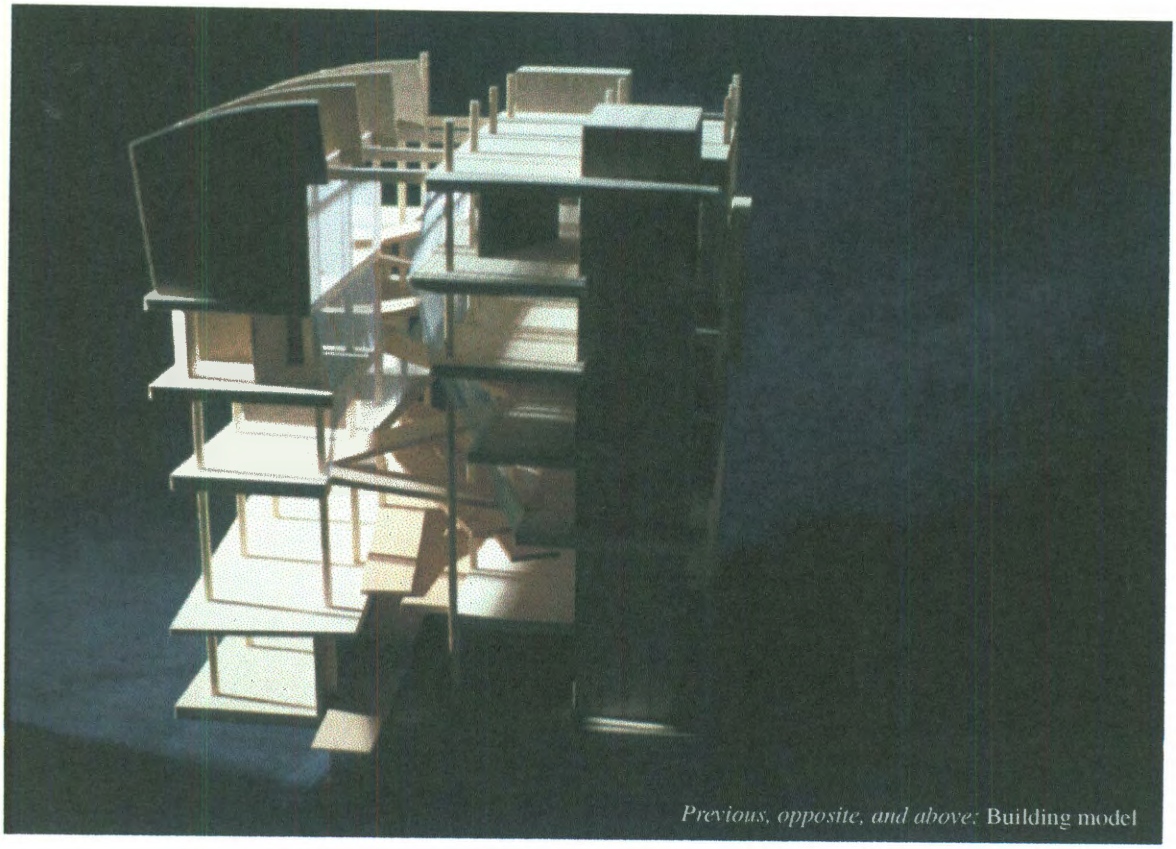




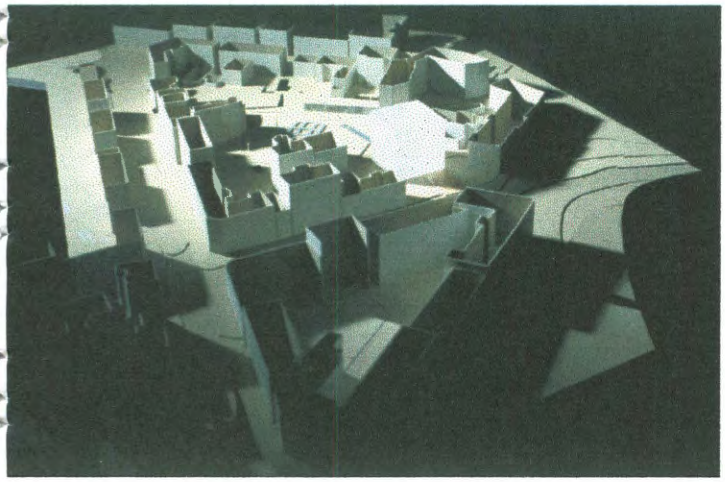


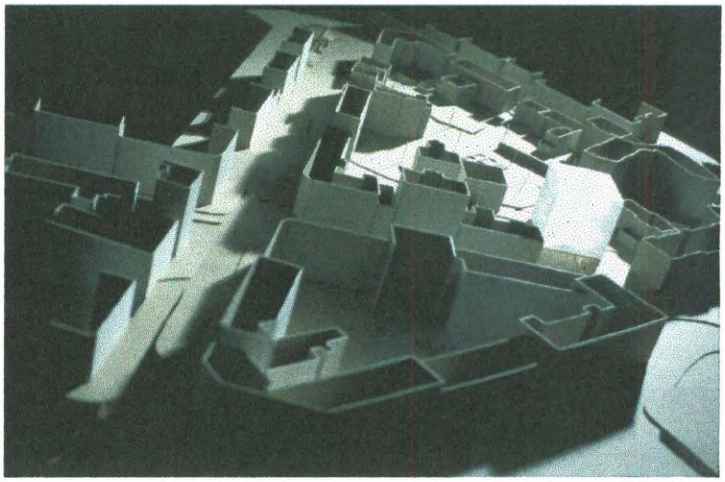


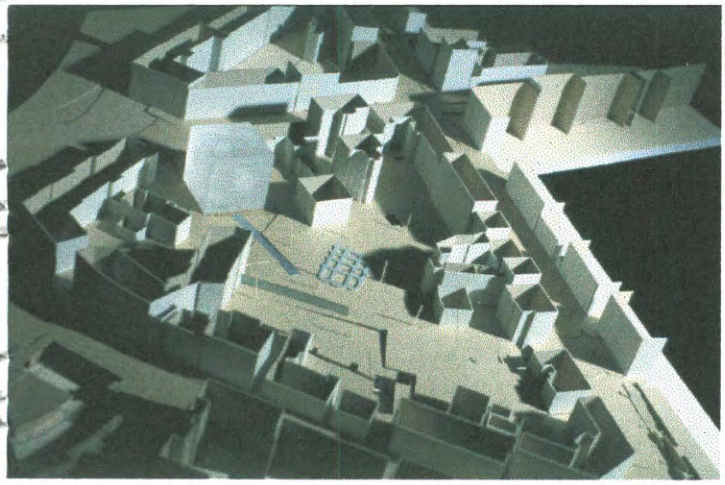


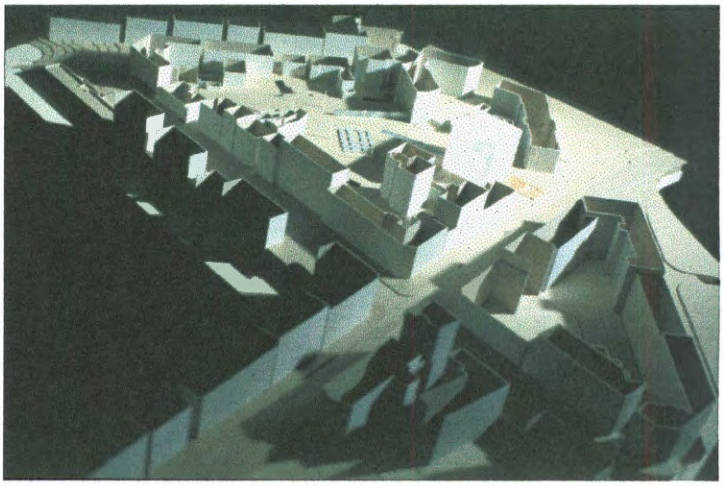


Previous, opposite, and above: Building model

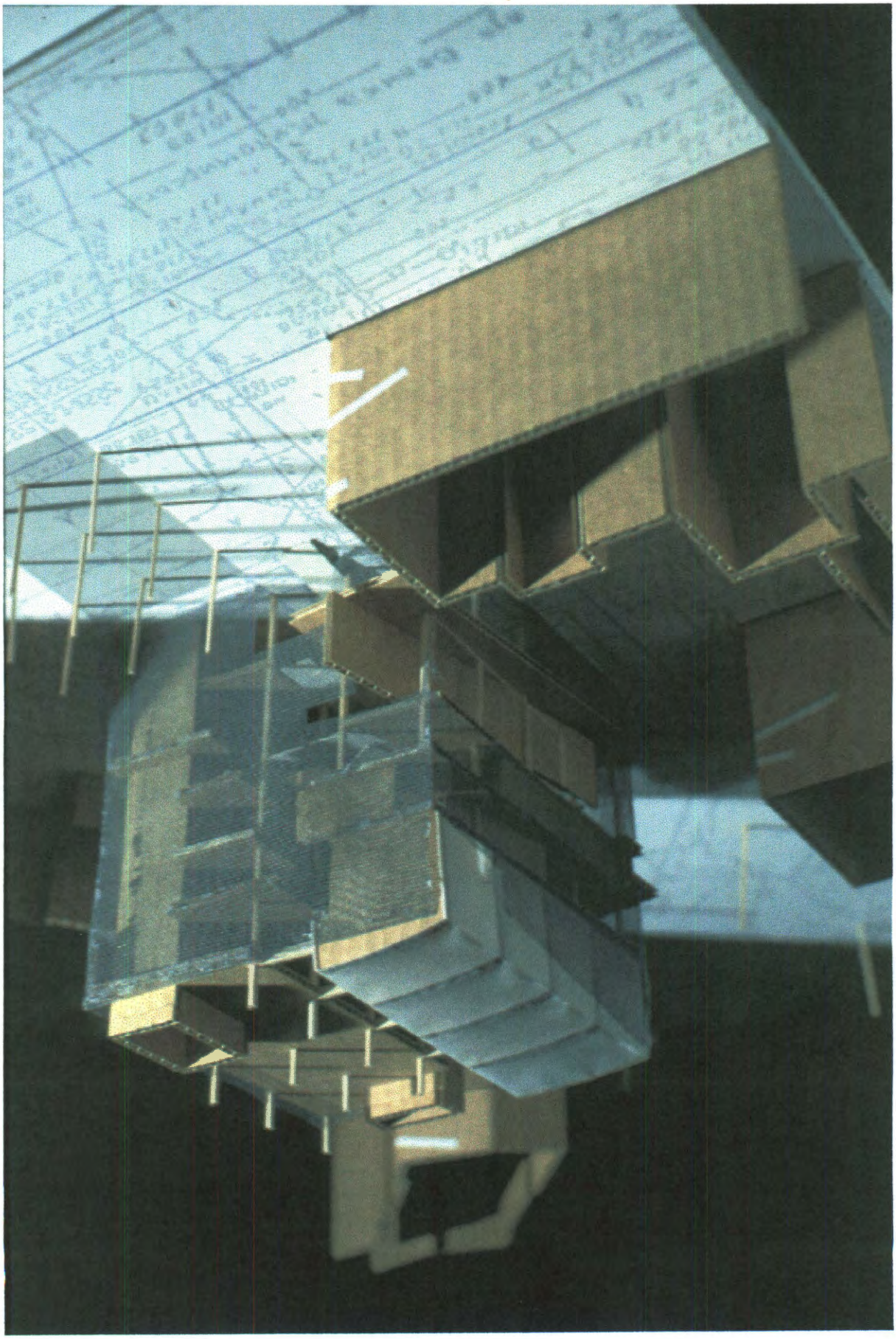




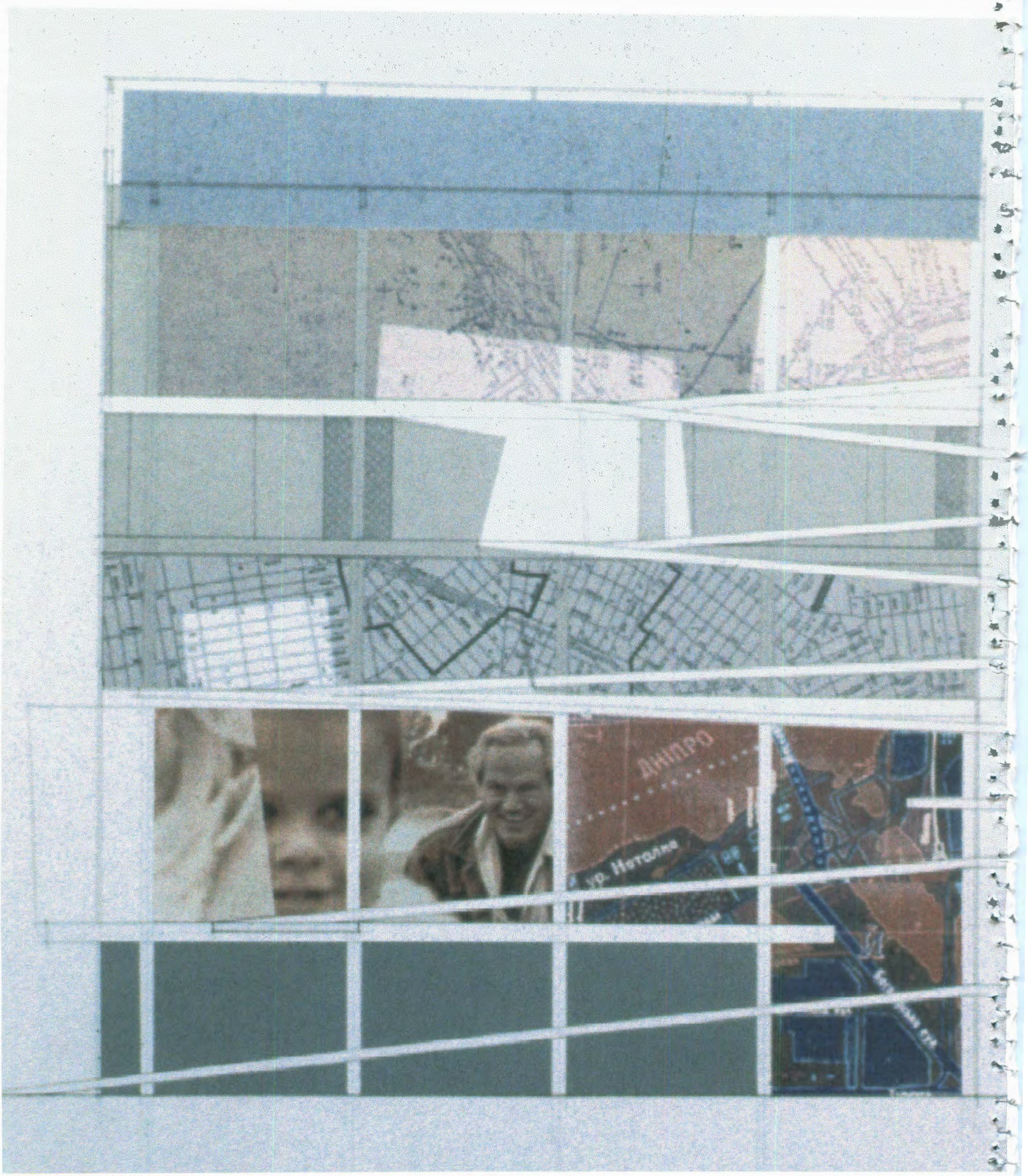


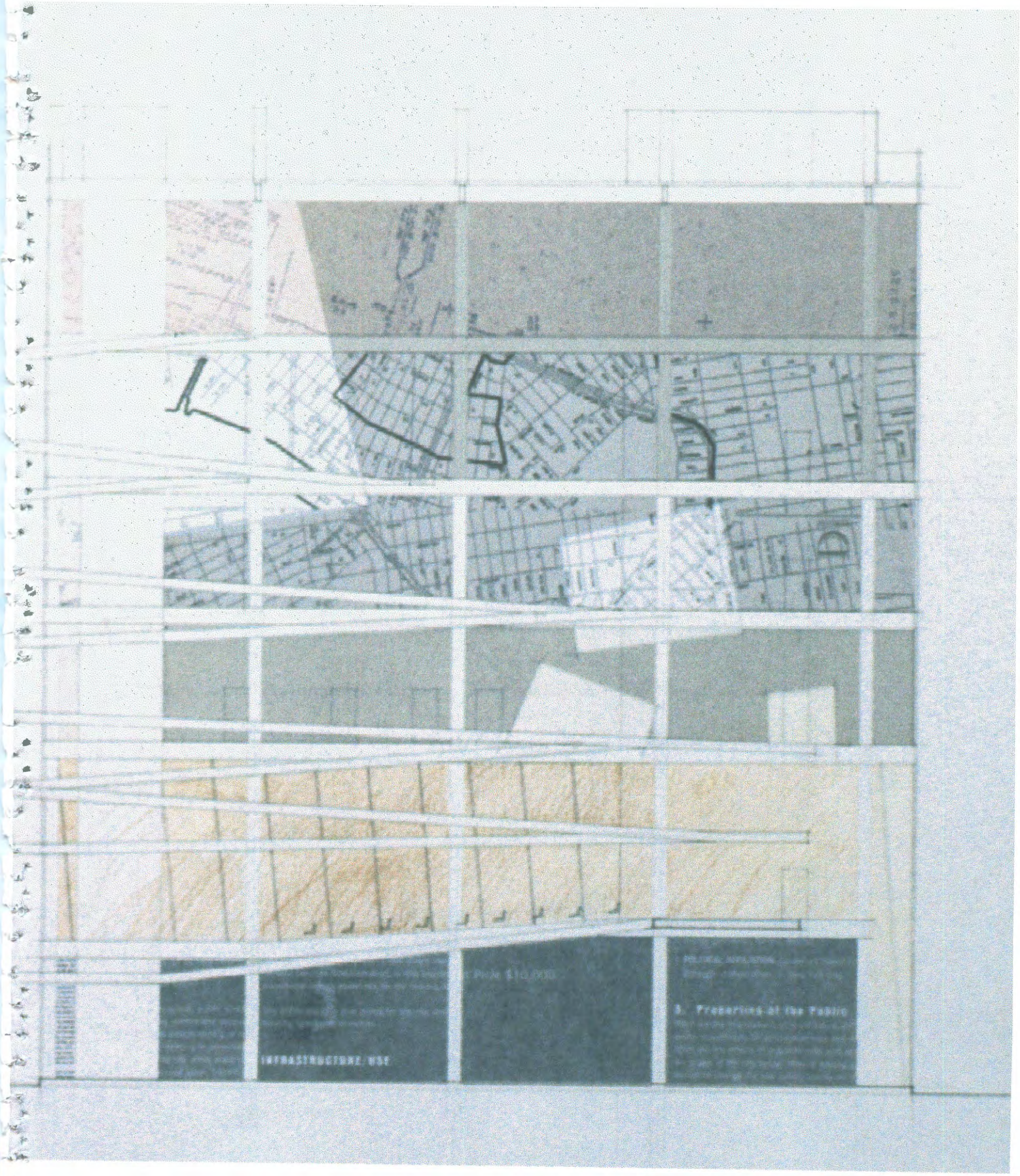


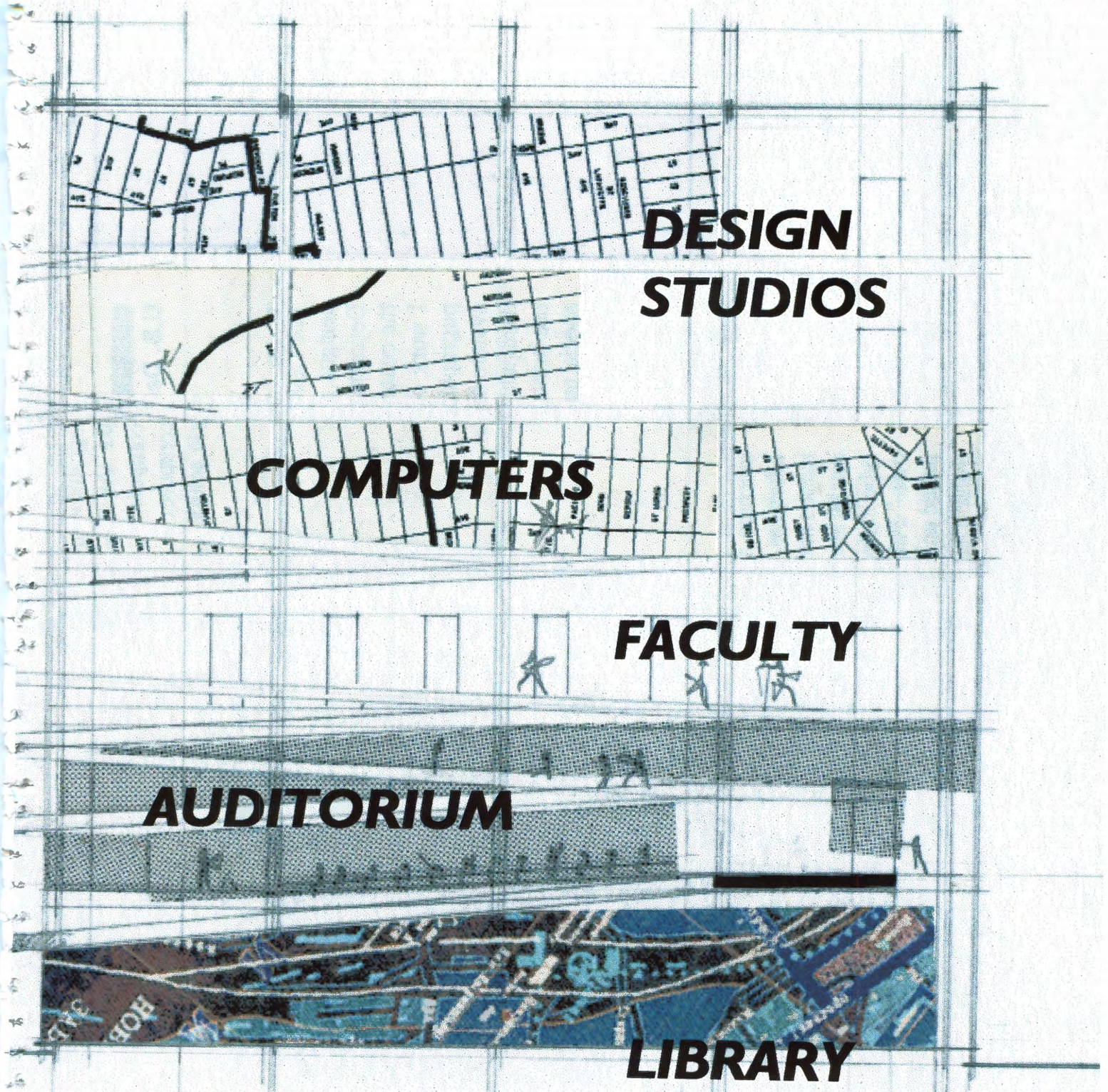
Opposite and above: Site model



Altogether, the challenge of this particular design proposal was to create a space for a contemporary architectural school without compromising Kiev's historical integrity. The project does not simulate the existing urban environment. It introduces a new design vocabulary into traditional piecemeal planning. The building-bulk of the school will dominate the urban quarter--spatially as well as formally this difference will benefit the city--and help to organize and unify it into a full-fledged urban block. The school will also serve the needs of the modern academic users, which I believe will then create the possibility of its development into the future. Finally, from the very beginning this project was set to explore the possibilities of a new architecture school not by reestablishing already established design canons but through the invention and interrogation of their planning solutions. This project is about the challenge of the modern architecture school that takes place today.


ДНІПРО
вул. Наталія

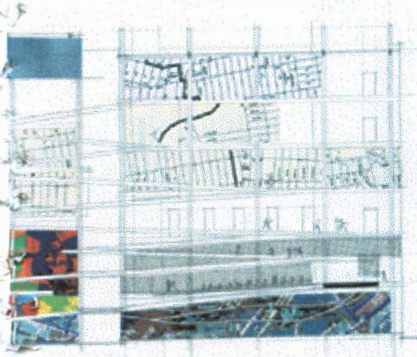

INFRASTRUCTURE/ USE
3. Properties of the Public


DESIGN
STUDIOS
COMPUTERS
FACULTY
AUDITORIUM
LIBRARY

The proposed building stands as a mimesis of the macrocosm itself; its intention was to create a space *inside* without its direct correspondence to the outside. Whether the exterior form of the building approximates a cube, the internal *form* reflects and registers the multiplicity of the inside movement. A continuous ramp relativizes the coordinates by taking away 0,0,0 point and constructs the perception of changeable and elusive space, neither totalized nor controlled. With its arrangement the program of the building (as well as its visual identification) can change continuously without affecting the architectural whole. It is here where the program of the school meets its unprogrammed condition.

It is precisely here where a new *facade* has the possibility to unfold.

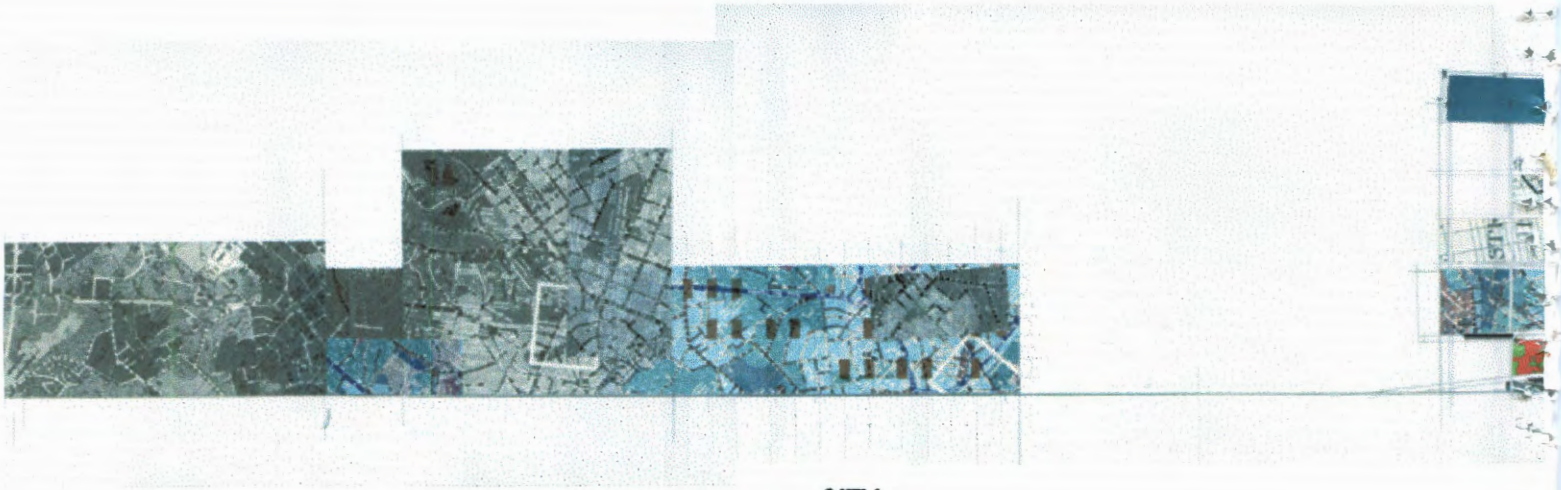
SCHOOL



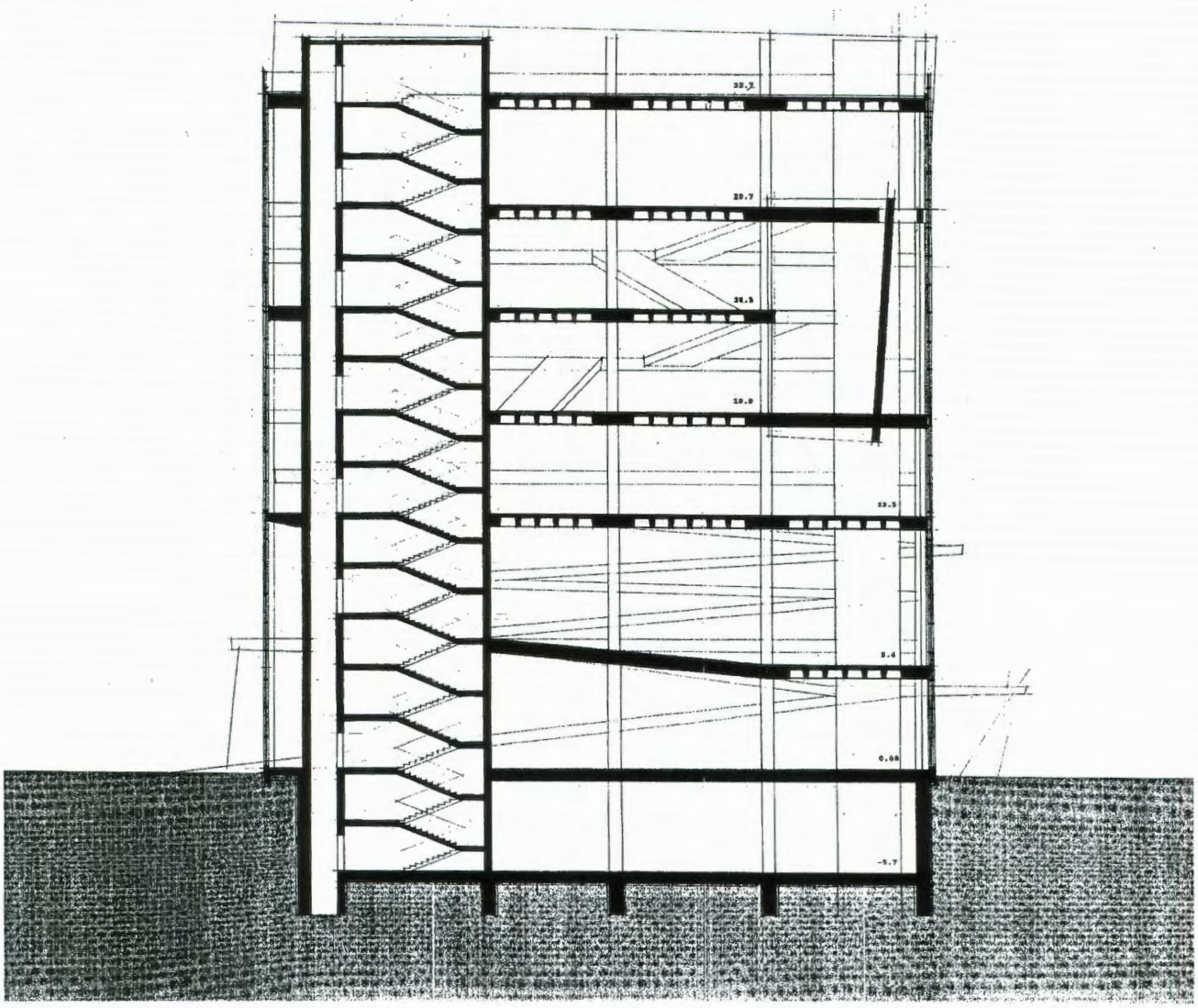
THEATER


DESIGN STUDIOS
FACULTY
DESIGN STUDIOS
EXHIBITION
WORKSHOPS

The exterior surface of the building has been deprived its representational role of the conventional facade. Instead, it is designed as a diagram of potential activities, where different forms, functions, contents, and expressions from the irregular registers are pressed together into a single tissue.



CITY


33.3
29.7
26.1
22.5
18.9
15.3
11.7
8.1
4.5
0.90
-2.7

Notes

[1] Peter Eisenman, "The End of The Classical: The End of The Beginning, The End of The End." *Re:working Eisenman* (p. 28).

[2] Robin Middleton, ed. *The Beaux-Arts and Nineteenth-Century French Architecture* (p. 128).

[3] Ibid, p. 134.

[4] Hermann G. Pundt. *Shinkel's Berlin. A Study in Environmental Planning* (p. 182).

[5] Ibid.

[6] Barry Bergdoll. *Karl Friedrich Shinkel: An Architecture for Prussia* (p. 203).

[7] from Bauhaus Manifesto. Gillian Naylor, *The Bauhaus Reassessed* (p. 54).

[8] Walter Gropius, *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus* (p. 56).

[9] Ibid, p. 17.

[10] In fact, the social area was to become the hub of the whole enterprize. It could be opened up in order to create a large inter-connected performance and exhibition space or used for student staff parties. Work, living, eating, recreation and theatrical performance were soon united in what one commentator called the "miniature world of the Bauhaus." Dennis Sharp, *The Fagus Factory and the Dessau Bauhaus* (p. 5).

[11] Herbert Bayer, Walter Gropius, Ise Gropius, *Bauhaus 1919-1928* (p. 102).

[12] In *The New Architecture and The Bauhaus* Gropius writes: "The liberation of architecture from a welter of ornament, the emphasis on its structural functions, and the concentration on concise and economical solutions, represent the purely materia; side of that formalizing process on which the practical value of the New Architecture depends. The other, the aesthetic satisfaction of the human soul, is just as important as the material. Both find their counterpart in that unity which is life itself. What is more important than this structural economy and its functional emphasis is the intellectual achievement which has made possible a new spatial vision. For whereas building is merely a matter of methods and matherials, architecture implies the mastery of space." (p. 19-20).

[13] Ibid, p. 32.

[14] from *GA Document, Special Issue 1970-1980* (p. 53).

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